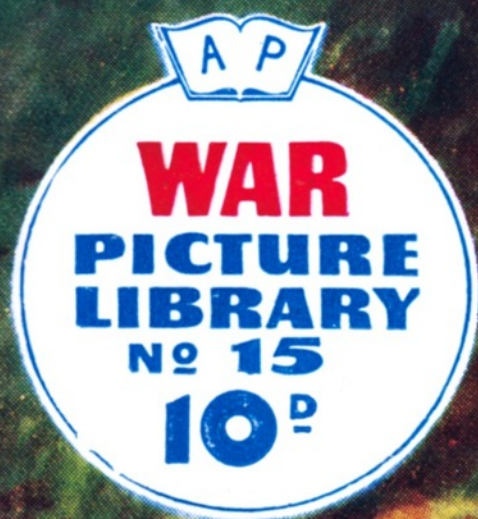


# ***NO QUARTER***





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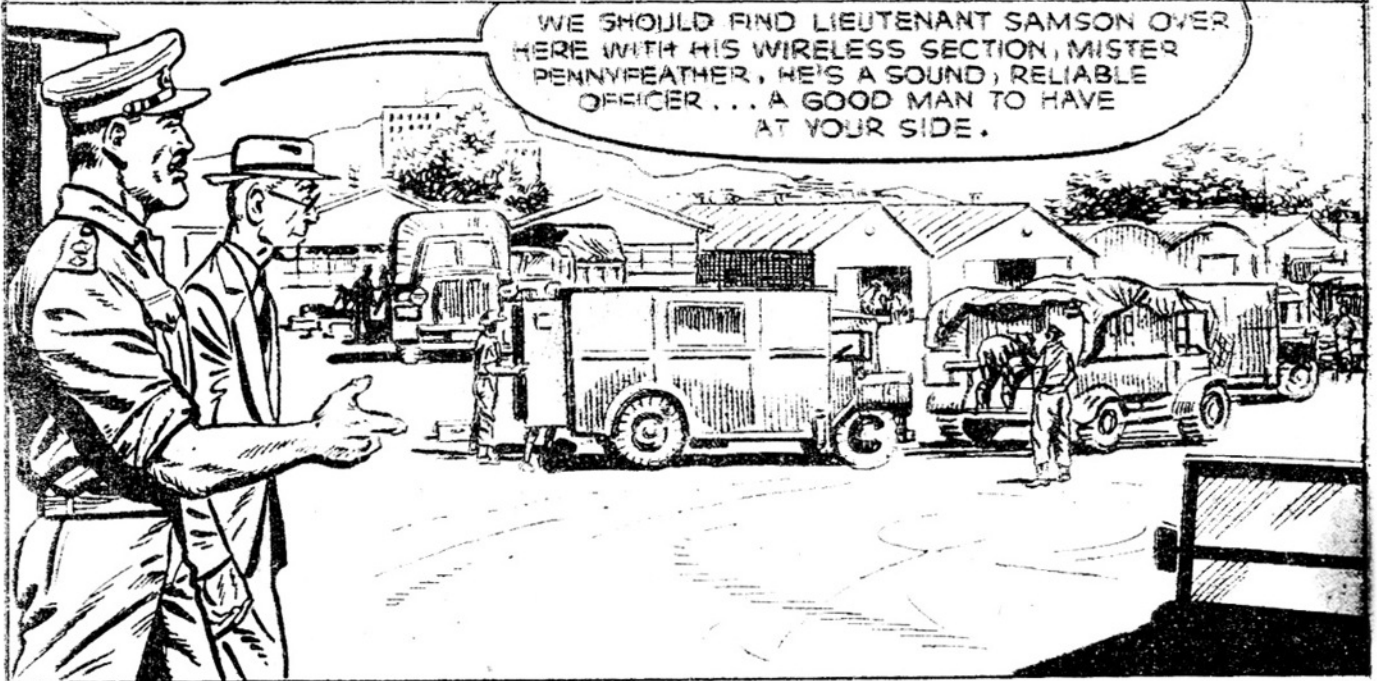
AS THE YEAR 1941 DREW TO AN UNEASY CLOSE, THE MARTIAL AND NAVAL MIGHT OF JAPAN WAS MOVING REMORSELESSLY ACROSS ASIA AND THE PACIFIC OCEAN. THE PRIDE OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY HAD BEEN HUMILIATED BY THE TREACHEROUS ATTACK ON PEARL HARBOUR AND THE YELLOW AND BLOOD-RED BANNER OF THE RISING SUN WAS BORNE TRIUMPHANTLY BEFORE THE JAPANESE ARMY AS IT MARCHED SOUTHWARDS TO FRESH CONQUESTS.





## Chapter 1. FIRST ONSLAUGHT

ACROSS THE PARADE GROUND OF THE ROYAL CORPS OF SIGNALS BARRACKS IN HONG KONG, FAR-DISTANT OUTPOST OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE, STRODE LIEUTENANT-COLONEL LARKIN, THE COMMANDING OFFICER, AND MR. HENRY PENNYFEATHER, SCIENTIST.



WE SHOULD FIND LIEUTENANT SAMSON OVER HERE WITH HIS WIRELESS SECTION, MISTER PENNYFEATHER. HE'S A SOUND, RELIABLE OFFICER... A GOOD MAN TO HAVE AT YOUR SIDE.

ALL EQUIPMENT WAS BEING BROUGHT TO A STATE OF UTMOST PREPAREDNESS, FOR IT SEEMED CERTAIN THAT HONG KONG WAS SOON TO FIND ITSELF UNDER ATTACK FROM THE JAPANESE.



...THERE, CORPORAL, THAT'S WHERE THE FAULT IS... THAT RESISTANCE HAS BURNT OUT.

H'RRUMPH! ER... MISTER SAMSON... COULD I BOTHER YOU, PLEASE?



LIEUTENANT SAMSON TURNED WITH A CHEERY EXCLAMATION OF SURPRISE...

OH, HALLO, SIR! I'LL BE RIGHT WITH YOU.



IT WAS EASY TO SEE HOW BILL SAMSON HAD COME TO BE NICKNAMED "SMILER" BY OFFICERS AND MEN ALIKE.

WHILE MR. PENNYFEATHER GINGERLY RUBBED HIS NUMBED FINGERS AFTER SMILER'S VIGOROUS HANDCLASP, THE C.O. EXPLAINED THE PURPOSE OF THE SCIENTIST'S VISIT.

MISTER PENNYFEATHER HAS BROUGHT SOME OF THE LATEST RADAR EQUIPMENT OUT FROM ENGLAND. HE IS TO FIT IT UP AS SOON AS POSSIBLE ON OUR ADVANCE AIRFIELDS, AND YOU, SMILER, ARE GOING TO ESCORT HIM AND GENERALLY SEE HE GETS ALL THE HELP HE NEEDS. OKAY?

THAT'S FINE BY ME, SIR. NO REASON WHY WE SHOULDN'T START RIGHT AWAY IF THE EQUIPMENT IS HERE.





# No Quarter

WITHIN TWO HOURS, A VAN WITH THE RADAR EQUIPMENT SPECIALLY INSTALLED INSIDE IT WAS THREADING ITS WAY THROUGH THE NARROW CROWDED STREETS OF KOWLOON ON THE MAINLAND OF CHINA.

WHAT I CAN'T UNDERSTAND, PROF, IS WHY THEY SEND A SCIENTIST BOB LIKE YOU OUT... SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT SOMEONE IN THE SERVICES COULD HAVE HANDLED THINGS.

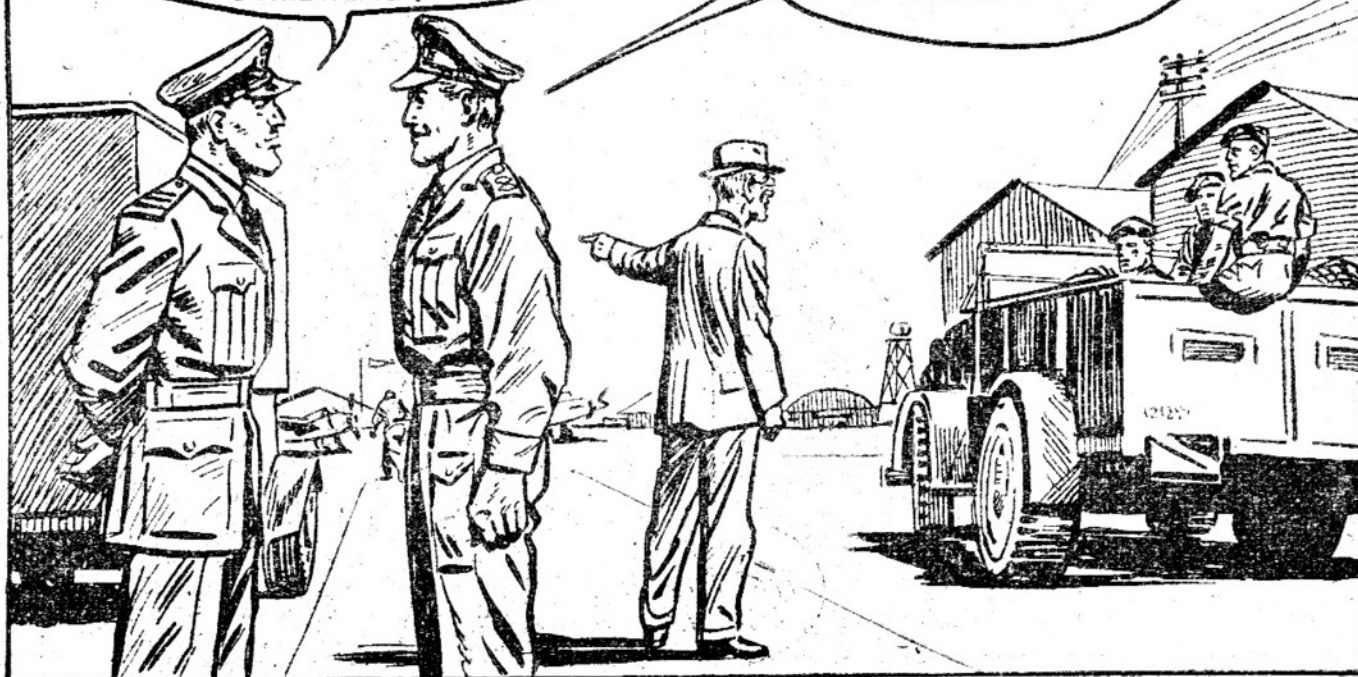
THERE'S BEEN NO TIME TO INSTRUCT ANYONE ON THIS NEW RADAR, MISTER SAMSON... IT WAS A TOP PRIORITY RUSH JOB FOR THE FAR EAST AREA.



FORTY MILES INLAND, THEY REACHED THE CLOSELY GUARDED ENTRANCE TO A ROYAL AIR FORCE AIRFIELD AND WERE WARMLY WELCOMED BY THE STATION COMMANDER.

WE'RE MIGHTY GLAD TO SEE YOU, LIEUTENANT. OUR OLD RADAR COULDN'T 'SEE' A MOUNTAIN IF IT FELL ON IT, AND I'VE AN UNEASY FEELING THE JAPS ARE COOKING UP SOMETHING.

IT SHOULDN'T TAKE LONG TO FIX UP, SIR. THE PROF KNOWS ALL THERE IS TO BE KNOWN ABOUT IT... HE HELPED TO MAKE IT.





THE COMPLICATED AERIAL ARRAY OF THE RADAR HAD TO BE ERECTED BEFORE THE SET COULD GO INTO OPERATION.

WILL YOU BE LONG, MISTER SAMSON? THE SET IS ALL READY.

HALF A TICK, PROF... WE'VE ONLY GOT TO CONNECT UP THIS PIECE OF TRELLIS WORK.

SOON MR. PENNYFEATHER WAS INSTRUCTING THE R.A.F. RADAR OPERATORS WHO WERE TO CONTROL THE NEW EARLY WARNING SYSTEM...

KEEP THE ANODE CURRENT STEADY... SO! ANY AIRCRAFT PICKED UP BY OUR BEAM WILL CAUSE LIGHT BLIPS ON THE SCREEN... LIKE THAT... AND THAT... AND... ER... MISTER SAMSON, QUICKLY!

WHAT IS IT, PROF?

THE SCIENTIST'S VOICE ROSE TO A NERVOUS SQUEAK.

P-PLANES APPROACHING... MANY OF THEM!

CRUIKEY! THEY MUST BE JAPS!



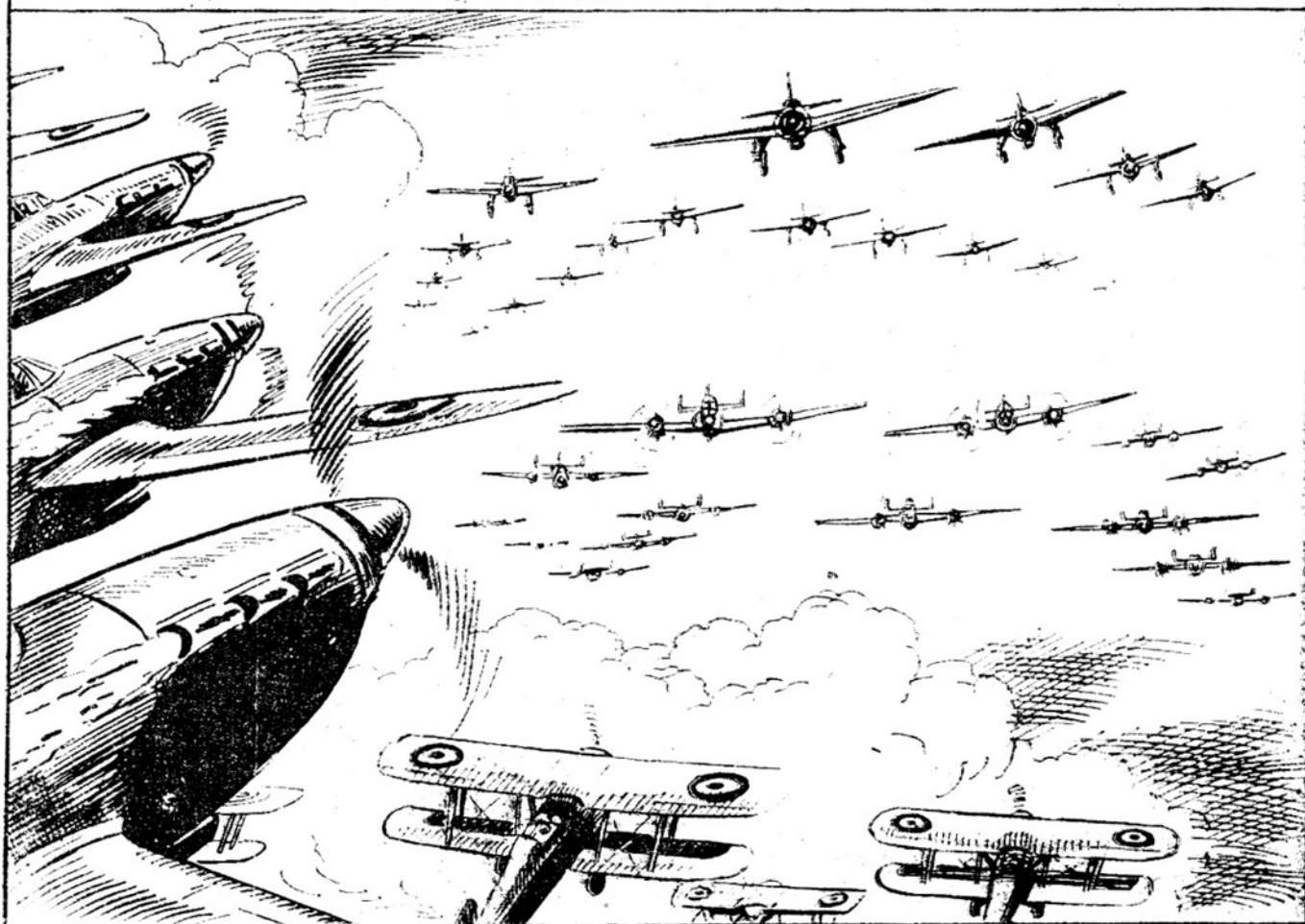
## No Quarter

SMILER GAVE A WARNING YELL, AND THE AIR RAID SIREN WAILED EERILY ACROSS THE DROME...



... AND ROYAL AIR FORCE FIGHTERS CLIMBED INTO THE AIR WITH A RISING CRESCENDO OF THUNDERING ENGINES.

THE BRITISH PLANES BARELY HAD TIME TO CLIMB TO A FEW THOUSAND FEET WHEN A GREY COMPACT CLOUD APPEARED LOW ON THE HORIZON, APPROACHING FAST. FEARLESSLY, THE R.A.F. PILOTS HURLED THEIR MACHINES HEAD-ON AT THE ENEMY.



THE HURRICANES CUT THROUGH THE RANKS OF THE SLOWER ENEMY FIGHTERS LIKE A HOT KNIFE THROUGH BUTTER... AND JOINED UP WITH THE GALLANT GLADIATORS IN A CONCERTED ATTACK ON THE JAPANESE BOMBERS.





## No Quarter

NOTHING COULD STOP SOME OF THE BOMBERS BREAKING THROUGH AND THEIR DEADLY CARGOES BEGAN TO FALL ON THE AIRFIELD. BUT SUDDENLY SMILER SAMSON'S ATTENTION WAS SNATCHED AWAY FROM THE BATTLE RAGING IN THE AIR ...



THE YOUNG SIGNALS OFFICER NOTICED THE SILENT BOFORS GUN POSITION NEARBY AND SPURTED TOWARDS IT.



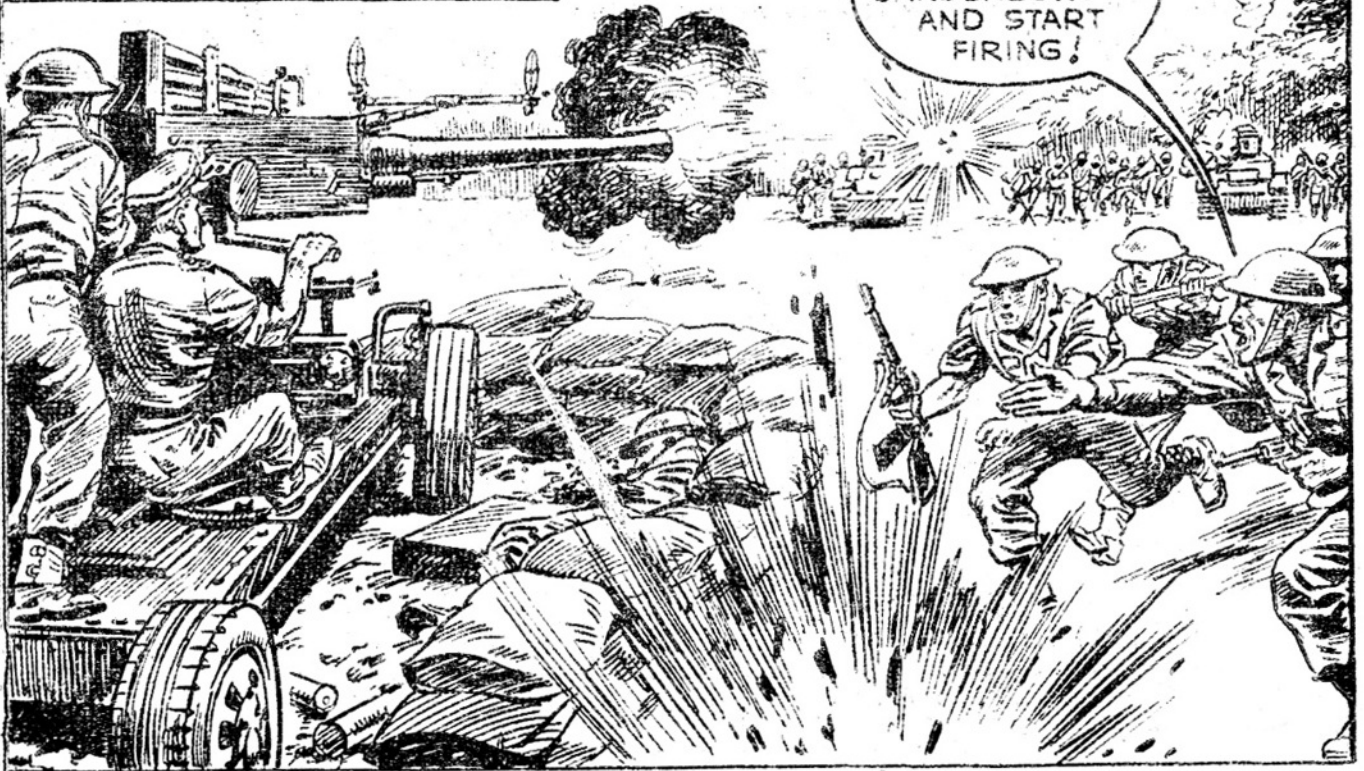
HE FLUNG HIMSELF INTO ONE OF THE GUN LAYERS' SEATS AND SWUNG THE BARREL DOWN SO THAT IT POINTED TOWARDS THE ADVANCING TANKS.



## No Quarter

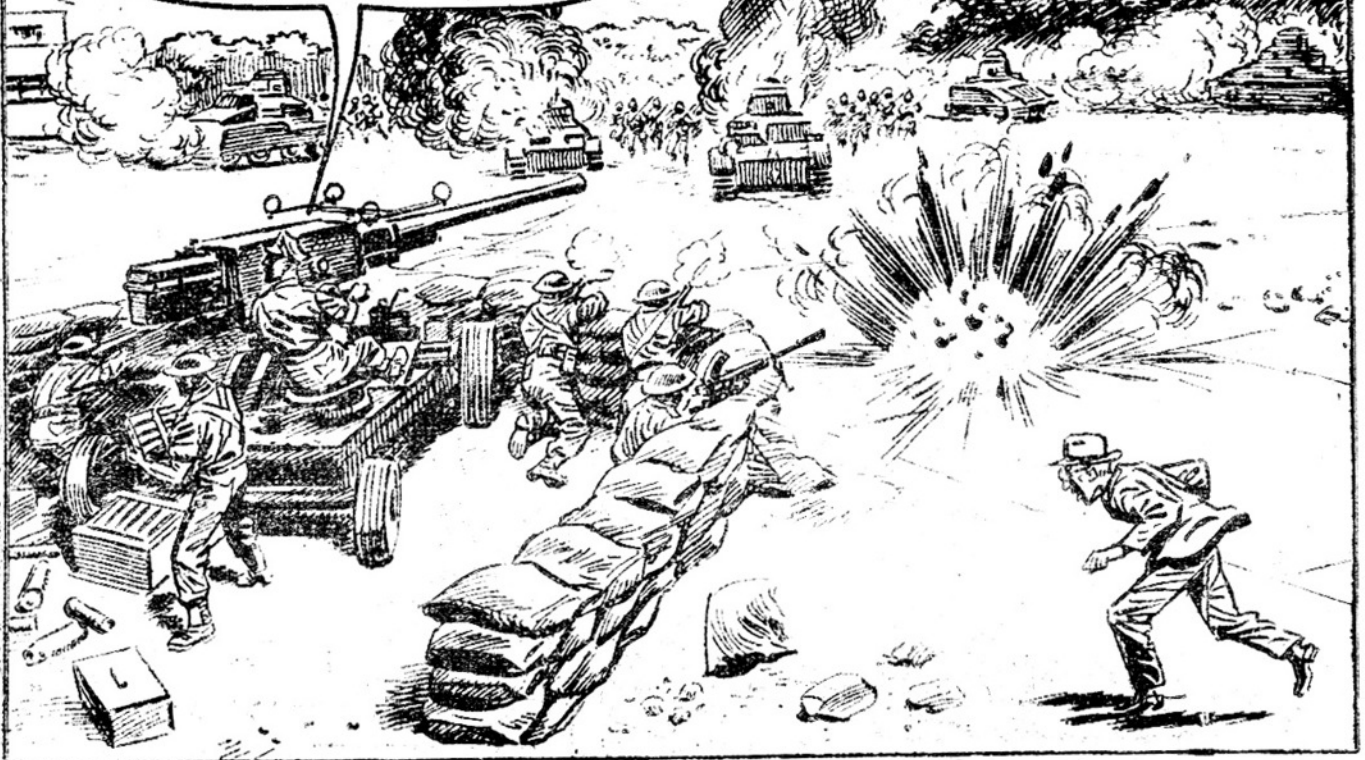
OVER OPEN SIGHTS, THE QUICK-FIRING GUN BEGAN TO PUNCH SHELLS AT THE ENEMY TANKS...

DOWN  
BEHIND THOSE  
SANDBAGS...  
AND START  
FIRING!



THE TANKS HESITATED, TWO OF THEM ALREADY OUT OF ACTION... AND THEN BEGAN TO LOOK FOR A WAY ROUND THE CENTRE OF RESISTANCE.

GOT ANOTHER CLIP READY?  
WE'VE GIVEN THEM SOMETHING  
TO THINK ABOUT.





THEN, AS ANOTHER CLIP OF SHELLS WAS BANGED INTO POSITION, SMILER SAMSON FELT A HESITANT HAND ON HIS ARM.

ER...MISTER SAMSON...IN VIEW OF THE SOMEWHAT DANGEROUS SITUATION...DON'T YOU THINK WE OUGHT TO GET THE NEW RADAR OUT OF HARM'S WAY? IT MUST NOT FALL INTO THE ENEMY'S HANDS, YOU KNOW.

BY GOLLY, PROF... I'D FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT YOU IN THE EXCITEMENT. YOU'RE DEAD RIGHT...THINGS LOOK PRETTY HOPELESS HERE... THE AIRFIELD DEFENCES CAN ONLY DELAY THEM.



SMILER HANDED OVER CONTROL OF THE BOFORS GUN TO THE SERGEANT OF THE 'DROME'S DEFENCE FORCE, AND RACED TOWARDS THE RADAR VAN WITH THE SCIENTIST.

THE TRUCK'S ENGINE ROARED INTO LIFE AND SMILER SAMSON DROVE IT ON A ZIG-ZAG COURSE ACROSS THE AIRFIELD, WHERE FRENZIED EFFORTS WERE BEING MADE TO STRENGTHEN THE DEFENCES.

ALL ABOARD, LADS...IT'S GETTING TOO HOT FOR THIS BOX OF TRICKS. WE'RE GOING BACK TO H.Q.



THERE'S THE STATION COMMANDER...I'D BETTER HAVE A WORD WITH HIM.



THE BOX-LIKE TRUCK SCREECHED TO A HALT CLOSE BY THE AIR FORCE OFFICER.

I DECIDED THAT WE'D BETTER WITHDRAW THE RADAR BACK TO BASE, SIR — WE CAN'T RISK IT HERE. I HOPE YOU AGREE.



VERY WISE, LIEUTENANT. WE CAN'T HOPE TO HOLD OUT HERE FOR MORE THAN A FEW HOURS. THE AIRCRAFT HAVE ALREADY BEEN DIVERTED TO BASE AIRFIELDS.

SMILER TURNED THE VAN ON TO THE ROAD AND PRESSED HIS FOOT HARD DOWN ON THE ACCELERATOR.

THOSE SOLDIERS ON THE ROAD BEFORE US, MISTER SAMSON... AREN'T... AREN'T THEY JAPANESE?

JUMPING JUPITER! THEY ARE THAT! HOLD ON TO YOUR HAT, PROF!



WE CAN'T STOP NOW! PRESS ON... AND LET'S HOPE THERE ARE NO TANKS AROUND THE CORNER.



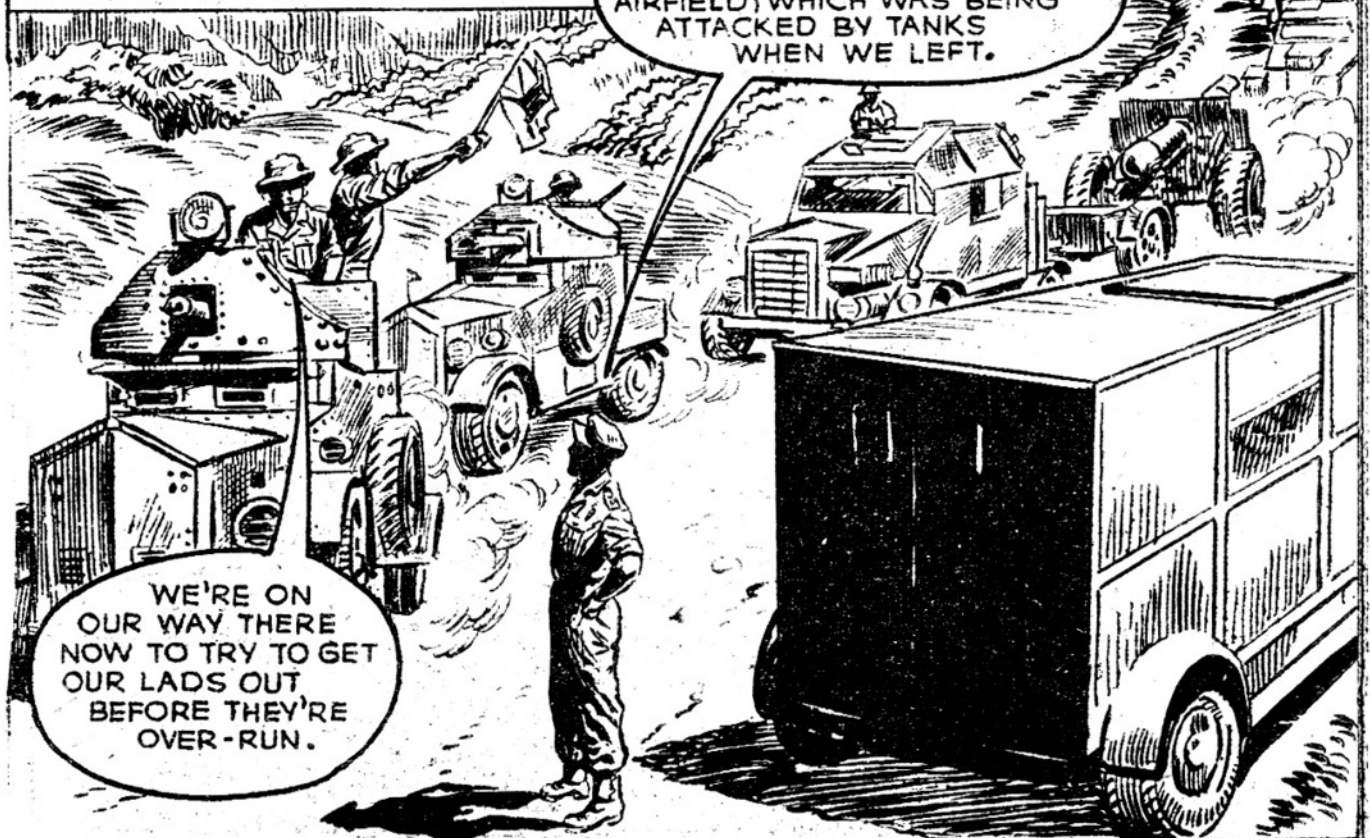


THE VAN FLASHED BY STARTLED YELLOW FACES, AND A RAGGED VOLLEY OF RIFLE SHOTS FOLLOWED IT DOWN THE ROAD.



FORTUNATELY THE ENEMY SOLDIERS MUST HAVE BEEN AN ADVANCE PATROL WHO HAD BROKEN THROUGH TO THE MAIN ROAD, FOR THE OCCUPANTS OF THE VAN MET NO OTHERS. TWENTY MILES ON, SMILER PULLED UP BESIDE A CONVOY OF BRITISH ARMoured CARS AND ARTILLERY.

THEY'VE CUT THE ROAD BY THE AIRFIELD, WHICH WAS BEING ATTACKED BY TANKS WHEN WE LEFT.



DURING THE FOLLOWING TENSE DAYS, THE ARMY MADE A FIGHTING WITHDRAWAL TO THE ISLAND OF HONG KONG, CLOSELY PRESSED BY SEVERAL JAPANESE DIVISIONS. THERE THEY TURNED AT BAY.



AND POUNCE THEY DID! BEFORE LONG, THE JAPANESE WERE FIGHTING SAVAGELY TO GAIN A FOOTHOLD ON THE TINY ISLAND AND ALL RANKS WERE THROWN INTO THE BATTLE.





THE LANDINGS CAME AS PREDICTED AND FANATICAL JAPANESE MARINES HURLED THEMSELVES ASHORE IN THE FACE OF WITHERING FIRE.



DESPITE FEARFUL LOSSES, SOME OF THE INVADERS STORMED UP THE CLIFFS.

GET BACK...AND  
TAKE THOSE OTHERS  
WITH YOU!



FOR A WHILE, THE ASSAULT WAS BROKEN.

THE C.O.'S COMPLIMENTS, SIR... WOULD YOU REPORT TO HIM AT H.Q. AT ONCE? MISTER RAWLINGS IS COMING UP TO TAKE OVER COMMAND.

REPORT BACK? OKAY... IF THAT'S WHAT HE WANTS.



THIRTY MINUTES LATER...

WE'VE HAD ORDERS THAT EVERY EFFORT IS TO BE MADE TO GET MISTER PENNYFEATHER AND FIVE OTHER RADAR SPECIALISTS OUT OF HONG KONG. WE'RE GOING TO TRY TO FLY HIM OUT TO SINGAPORE... TONIGHT. AND YOU... MISTER SAMSON... ARE GOING WITH HIM!

ME? BUT... BUT, SIR... I CAN'T RUN OUT NOW...



I'M SORRY, SMILER... THAT'S AN ORDER! THE JOURNEY BETWEEN HERE AND SINGAPORE IS FRAUGHT WITH DANGER... AND YOU MAY HAVE TO USE ALL YOUR INGENUITY TO GET YOUR PARTY THERE.



BUT... HANG IT, SIR... TO HAVE TO LEAVE JUST WHEN THE TROUBLE'S STARTED. OH WELL... I GUESS IT'S NO GOOD PROTESTING. WISH MY MEN THE BEST OF LUCK FOR ME, SIR... I THINK YOU'RE ALL GOING TO NEED IT!





## Chapter 2. **FLIGHT OF PERIL**

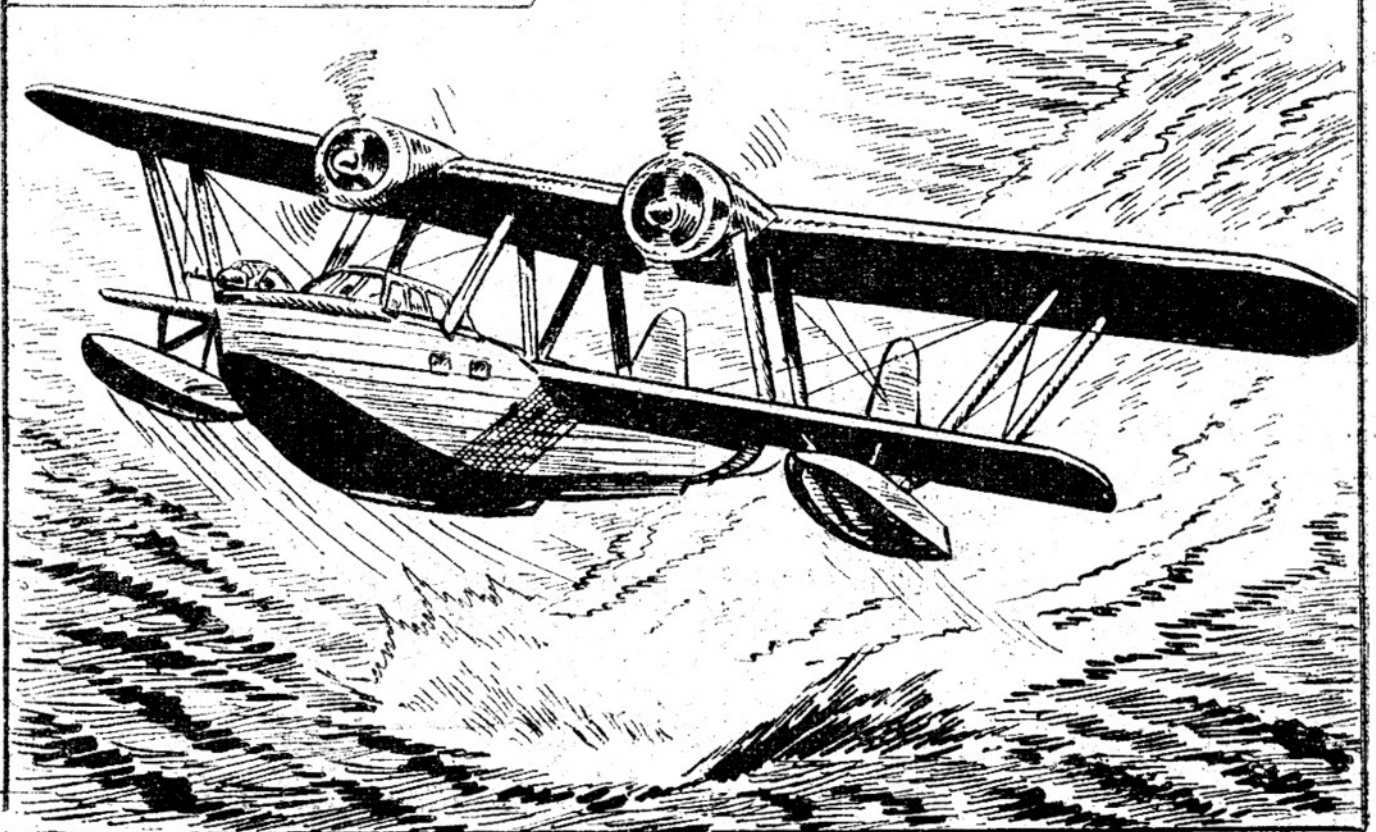
AS SOON AS THE SHORT EVENING HALF-LIGHT HAD DEEPEENED TO DARKNESS, A BOAT PULLED AWAY FROM THE SHORE OF A SMALL BAY ON THE WESTERN SIDE OF THE ISLAND OF HONG KONG.



MR. PENNYFEATHER AND SOME OTHER CIVILIAN RADAR MEN...AND LIEUTENANT BILL SAMSON, ROYAL CORPS OF SIGNALS, SCRAMBLED ABOARD THE SARO LONDON FLYING BOAT.



LEAVING A TURBULENT WHITE WAKE ON THE DARK WATERS, THE GREAT AIRCRAFT THUNDERED INTO THE AIR...



THEY HAD NOT BEEN MANY MINUTES AIRBORNE WHEN THE NIGHT SKY ABOUT THEM WAS TORN APART BY JAGGED WHITE FLASHES...

ANTI-AIRCRAFT  
FIRE!

IT MUST BE A FLAK-SHIP! WE'D  
BETTER CHANGE DIRECTION SOON!  
PILOT... IT'S DEAD CERTAIN  
THEY'LL PLOT THE COURSE  
WE ARE NOW ON.

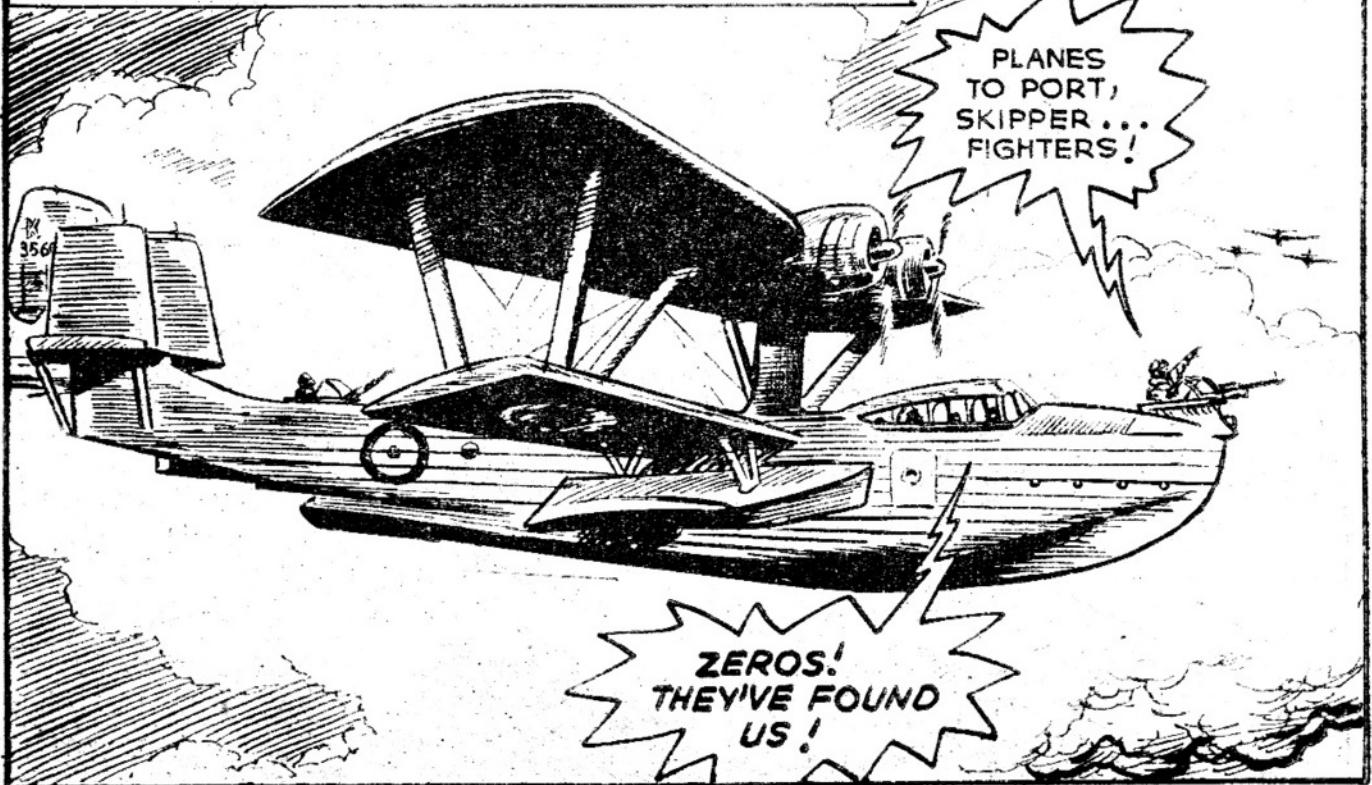
AYE...  
AND SEND  
FIGHTERS AFTER  
US!



THROUGH THE NIGHT... INTO THE HARSH LIGHT OF DAY...  
THE FLYING BOAT DRONED ONWARDS, UNTIL IT SEEMED  
THEY MUST HAVE ESCAPED ALL PURSUIT. BUT THEN...

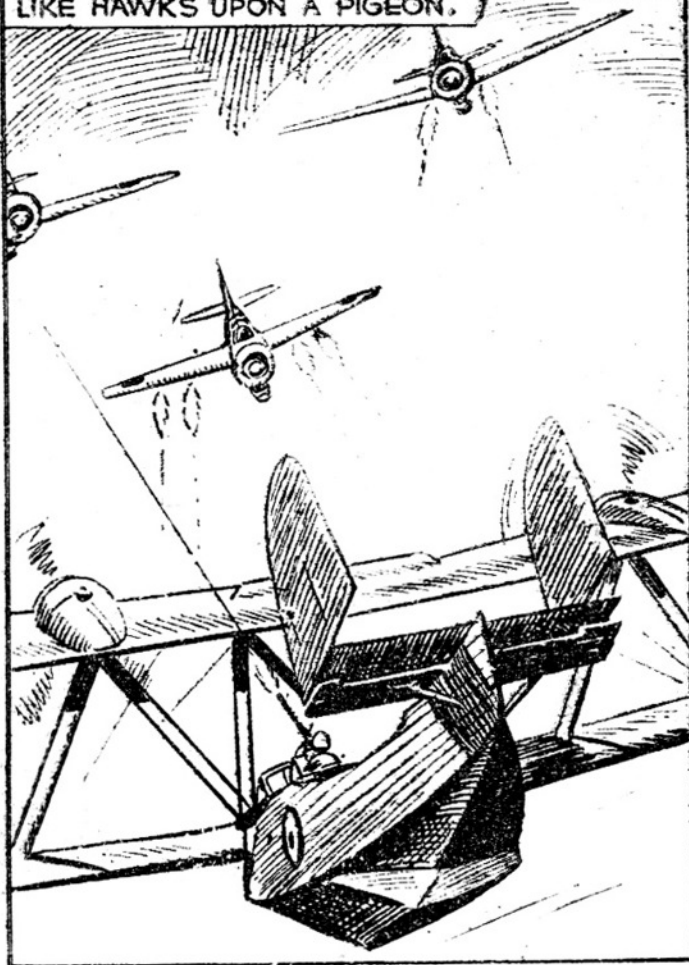
PLANES  
TO PORT,  
SKIPPER...  
FIGHTERS!

ZEROS!  
THEY'VE FOUND  
US!

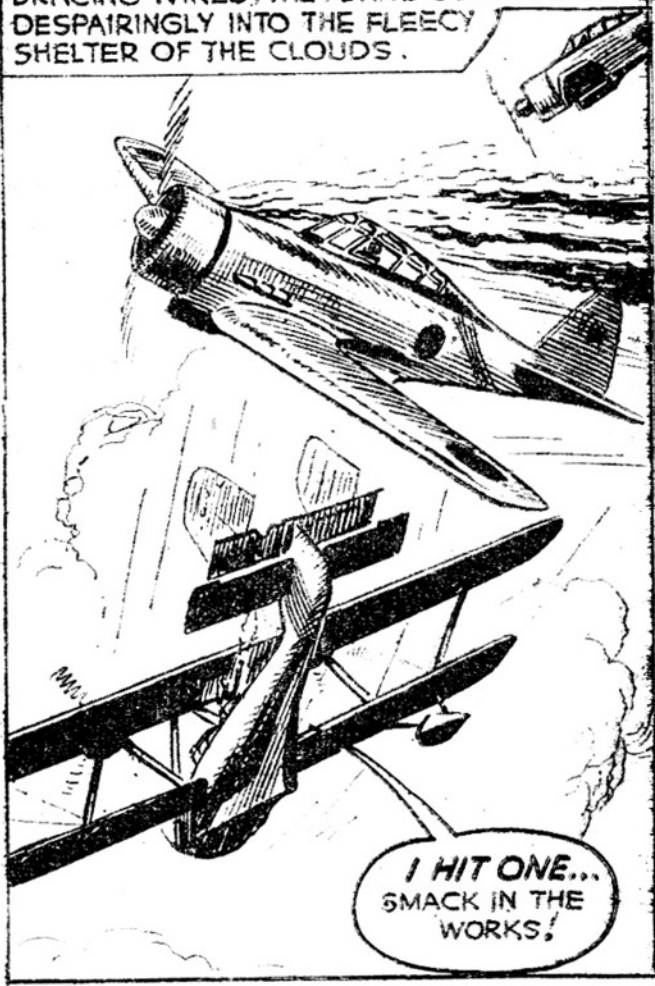




THE SLEEK AND DEADLY JAPANESE FIGHTERS BORE DOWN UPON THE LUMBERING MACHINE LIKE HAWKS UPON A PIGEON.



WIND SCREAMING THROUGH STRUTS AND BRACING WIRES, THE FLYING BOAT SWOOPED DESPAIRINGLY INTO THE FLEECY SHELTER OF THE CLOUDS.



BUT THE CLOUDS WERE SPARSE AND WIDE-SPACED AND AS THE FLYING BOAT CAME INTO THEIR SIGHT FOR A FEW MOMENTS, THE ZEROS POUNCED AGAIN.



THE GREAT PLANE STAGGERED AS THE INJURED PILOT'S HAND FELL LIMPLY FROM THE CONTROLS. THE CO-PILOT SNATCHED AT THE STICK, BUT EVEN THOUGH HE EXERTED ALL HIS STRENGTH HE COULD NOT BRING HER UNDER CONTROL.



QUICK! GIVE ME A HAND, SOMEONE... SHE'S OUT OF CONTROL!

HANG ON... I'M COMING!

SATISFIED THAT THE BRITISH PLANE WOULD NEVER PULL OUT OF THAT DEATH DIVE, THE ZEROS TURNED AWAY. BUT THE CO-PILOT, AIDED BY SMILER SAMSON, HAD NOT GIVEN UP THE STRUGGLE.



SHE'S STRAIGHTENING OUT!

BUT TOO LATE! WE'RE GOING TO HIT THE DECK!



NEXT MOMENT THE FLYING BOAT  
GOUGED A PATH THROUGH THE  
MATTED JUNGLE AS IF IT  
WERE A GIANT CHISEL . . .



AT LAST IT CAME PONDEROUSLY TO REST...AND ALL WAS STILL. IT SEEMED IMPOSSIBLE THAT ANYONE COULD HAVE SURVIVED SUCH A CRASH... BUT THE FUSELAGE WAS STRONGLY CONSTRUCTED, AND MIRACULOUSLY IT HAD WITHSTOOD THE IMPACT.

PROF!  
THANK HEAVENS  
YOU'RE SAFE.  
HOW ARE THINGS  
BACK THERE?

BAD, I'M AFRAID, MISTER  
SAMSON. THERE ARE  
ONLY THREE OF US  
LEFT ALIVE.

IN A CLEARING CLOSE TO THE WRECKAGE, THEY BURIED THEIR DEAD...AND THEN TOOK STOCK OF THEIR POSITION.

WE MUST BE  
ON THE MALAY  
PENINSULA, ABOUT  
SIXTY MILES NORTH  
OF SINGAPORE.

IS THERE  
LIKELY TO BE  
ANY HELP NEAR  
AT HAND?

THERE ARE PROBABLY  
PLANTATIONS FARTHER INLAND.  
WE'LL RIG A STRETCHER FOR THE  
PILOT...AND START WALKING. THE  
SOONER WE GET MOVING THE  
BETTER... HE NEEDS  
MEDICAL ATTENTION.





PILOT OFFICER JIM MORE COLLECTED WHAT LITTLE WATER THERE WAS ABOARD THE CRASHED PLANE, AND THEY STARTED THEIR TREK.

FOLLOW THE PATH, PROF... IT MUST LEAD SOMEWHERE... AND IT RUNS IN A SOUTHERLY DIRECTION WHICH IS THE WAY WE WANT.



THEY MADE SLOW PROGRESS... BUT MANY HOURS LATER, THE NARROW TRACK BRANCHED INTO A BROADER TRAIL AND THEIR HOPES ROSE.

LOOK...LOOK! A HOUSE, MISTER SAMSON! WE'RE SAVED.

H'MM! DOESN'T SEEM MUCH SIGN OF LIFE, PROF.



WHEN THE TATTERED AND WEARY MEN REACHED THE CORNER OF THE BUNGALOW... THEY FOUND A RAMSHACKLE TRUCK STANDING AT THE VERANDAH STEPS. IT WAS LOADED WITH LUGGAGE.

LOOKS AS IF THE OWNER IS MOVING OUT... HERE HE IS, I SHOULDN'T WONDER!

WHERE... WHERE ON EARTH HAVE YOU CHAPS COME FROM? YOU'D BETTER NOT STAY HERE... THE JAPS HAVE LANDED JUST UP THE COAST.



THE PLANTATION MANAGER CAME CLOSER...

THEN WE'LL  
HAVE TO SCROUNGE  
A LIFT FROM YOU, SIR.  
WE MUST GET THIS  
INJURED MAN TO  
A DOCTOR.

BUT- BUT MY BELONGINGS ARE  
ON THE TRUCK. OH WELL, I SUPPOSE  
I MIGHT AS WELL DUMP 'EM... IT  
LOOKS AS IF THE WHOLE OF MALAYA  
IS GOING TO BE OVER-RUN  
BY THE YELLOW DEVILS.



HARRY CLEGG, THE PLANTER, REMOVED SOME OF  
HIS LUGGAGE FROM THE TRUCK, AND THEY MADE  
THE INJURED AIRMAN AS COMFORTABLE AS  
POSSIBLE ON SOME BEDDING. THEN  
THEY GOT GOING...

SINGAPORE...  
HERE WE COME...  
WE HOPE!





THEY RATTLED DOWN THE MOUNTAIN ROAD IN FINE STYLE,  
LURCHED ROUND A SHARP BEND AND THEN...



THE BRAKES SCREECHED DESPAIRINGLY AND IT SEEMED THAT  
THEY MUST CRASH... BUT THE TRUCK SHUDDERED TO A  
HALT, MERE INCHES FROM THE ARMOURD CAR.

WHO ARE YOU... AND WHERE ARE  
YOU FROM? THIS AREA IS SUPPOSED  
TO HAVE BEEN CLEARED.



THE ARMY CAPTAIN LOOKED ENQUIRINGLY AT SMILER SAMSON.

AND WE'RE ON OUR WAY TO SINGAPORE FROM HONG KONG, SIR... OUR PLANE WAS SHOT DOWN ON THE COAST.

FROM HONG KONG? WORD'S JUST COME THROUGH THAT IT'S FALLEN, I'M AFRAID. YOU MUST HAVE GOT OUT JUST IN TIME.



A DEEP FEELING OF SADNESS OVERWHELMED THE USUALLY CHEERFUL SIGNALS OFFICER... THE COMRADES HE HAD SO RECENTLY LEFT WERE NOW DEAD OR IN JAPANESE HANDS.

YOU'D BETTER GET ON YOUR WAY. THE ENEMY HAVE MADE SEVERAL LANDINGS ALONG THE COAST... ONE CLOSE BY HERE. THERE'S ONLY A THIN LINE OF TROOPS HOLDING THEM AWAY FROM THE ROAD TO SINGAPORE.



WITH BILL SAMSON AT THE WHEEL, THE PLANTER'S TRUCK SET OFF ALONG THE SINGAPORE ROAD. IT HAD NOT COVERED MORE THAN A MILE WHEN THE SOUNDS OF GUNFIRE ECHOED AND RE-ECHOED AROUND THE HILLS.

SOUNDS AS IF THE JAPS HAVE REACHED THE ROAD, LIEUTENANT. THE ARMOURD CARS ARE IN ACTION.

SO ONCE AGAIN WE RUN WHILE OTHERS STAY BEHIND AND FIGHT.





SEVERAL HOURS LATER, LIEUTENANT SAMSON AND HIS PARTY REACHED THE JOHORE STRAITS AND THE CAUSEWAY LEADING TO THE ISLAND FORTRESS OF SINGAPORE.



SMILER REPORTED TO THE NEAREST MOVEMENTS OFFICER.

YOU SAY YOU'VE GOT THESE CIVVY RADAR EXPERTS WITH YOU. AS IT HAPPENS, THERE'S A BOAT SCHEDULED TO LEAVE SINGAPORE WITH A NUMBER OF VARIOUS SPECIALISTS. YOU'D BETTER GET ACROSS TO THE PORT WITH YOUR PARTY AND LOAD THEM ABOARD. I'LL MAKE OUT A MOVEMENT ORDER FOR YOU.

THANKS, SIR. I'LL BE GLAD TO GET THEM OFF MY HANDS.



SORRY TO DISAPPOINT YOU, LIEUTENANT... YOU'LL BE GOING WITH 'EM! THEY'RE STILL IN YOUR CHARGE AND YOU'LL HAVE TO ESCORT THEM ON THEIR WAY... TO JAVA.

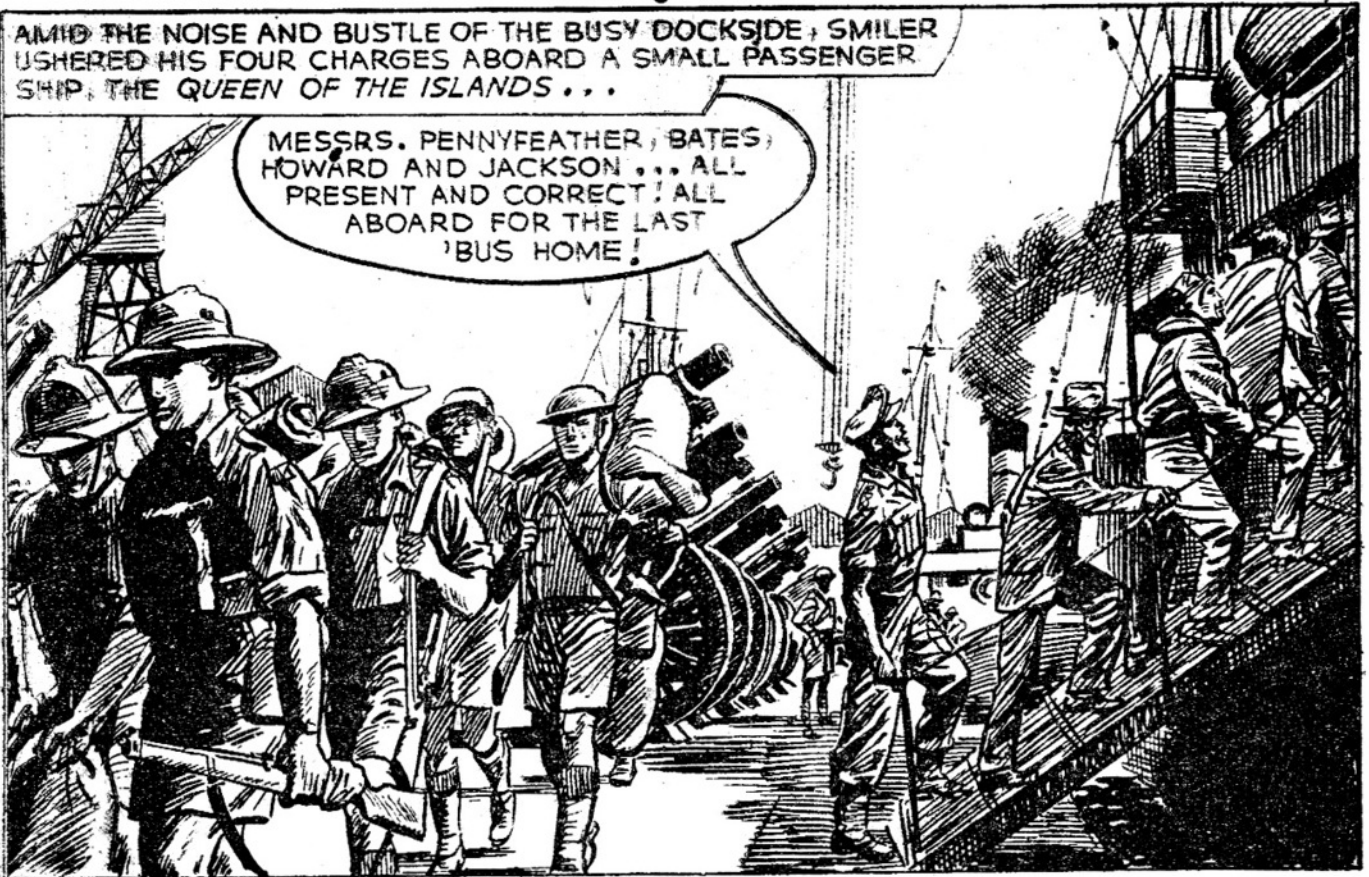
OH, NO!



AND A LONG PENT-UP SIGH OF FRUSTRATION BURST FROM SMILER SAMSON....

AMID THE NOISE AND BUSTLE OF THE BUSY DOCKSIDE, SMILER USHERED HIS FOUR CHARGES ABOARD A SMALL PASSENGER SHIP, THE QUEEN OF THE ISLANDS...

MESSRS. PENNYFEATHER, BATES, HOWARD AND JACKSON... ALL PRESENT AND CORRECT! ALL ABOARD FOR THE LAST 'BUS HOME!



IT WAS SEVERAL DAYS BEFORE THE QUEEN OF THE ISLANDS NOSED OUT FROM THE QUAY TOWARDS THE OPEN SEA... AND SMILER SAMSON, HIS HEART HEAVY, LEANED MOODILY ON THE RAIL...

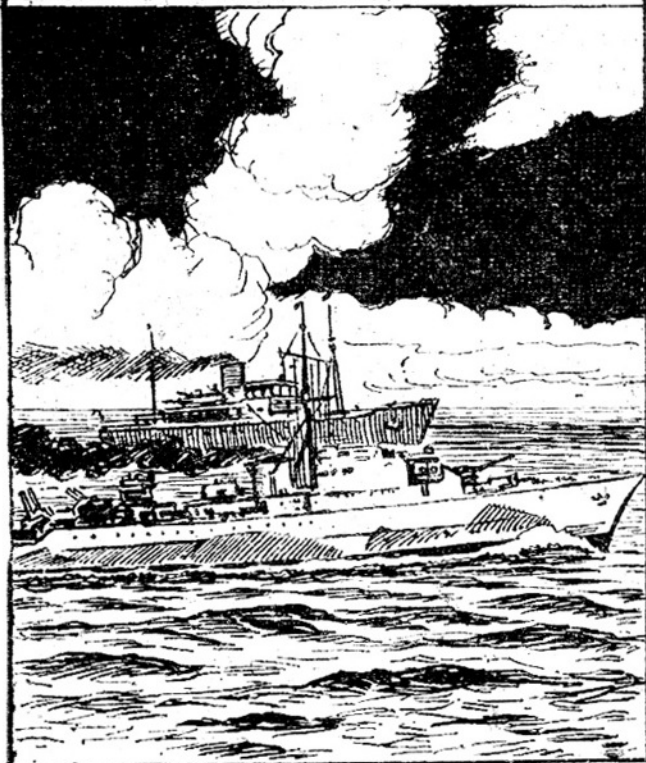
MISTER SAMSON... SMILER... I'M SORRY THAT WE HAVE BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN DRAGGING YOU AWAY FROM THE FIGHT YOU FEEL YOU SHOULD BE IN, BUT TAKE THE ADVICE OF AN OLDER MAN... AND BE PATIENT! THERE IS A GREAT DEAL OF TRUTH IN THE OLD SAYING 'HE WHO FIGHTS AND RUNS AWAY, LIVES TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY.'

THANKS, PROF... YOU MAY BE RIGHT AT THAT.





THROUGHOUT THAT NIGHT AND THE FOLLOWING DAY, THE SHIP WITH ITS SOLITARY DESTROYER ESCORT HEADED SOUTH WEST INTO THE TROPIC SEAS.



ONWARD... UNDER THE FRIENDLY COVER OF DARKNESS... BUT THAT COVER WAS SUDDENLY AND VIOLENTLY TORN ASIDE AS A STAR SHELL CAST A BLINDING LIGHT OVER THE TWO SHIPS.



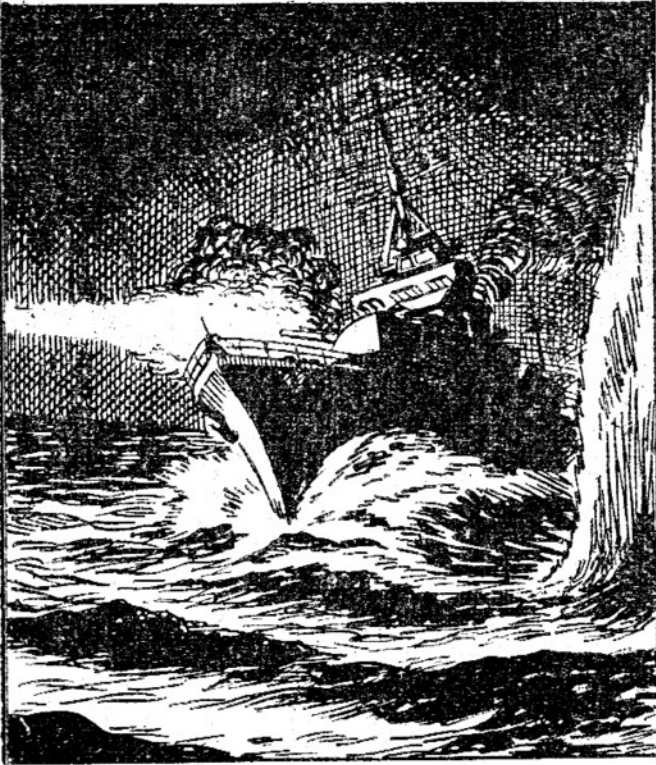
THOUGH TAKEN BY SURPRISE, THE BRITISH DESTROYER, *H.M.S. CULVERLEY*, WAS QUICK TO RETALIATE AND THE HARSH LIGHT OF HER FLARE REVEALED A POWERFUL JAPANESE NAVAL FORCE WITHIN STRIKING DISTANCE.

THE CRUISER IS OUR TARGET, GUNS. SIGNALMAN, MAKE A SIGNAL TO QUEEN OF THE ISLANDS 'I AM ENGAGING ENEMY. TRY TO SLIP AWAY.'

AYE, AYE, SIR!



THE CULVERLEY'S 4.7-INCH GUNS CRASHED OUT IN UNISON AND SHE HEELED OVER AS HER TURBINES SENT HER SLIM LENGTH SLICING THROUGH THE WATER.



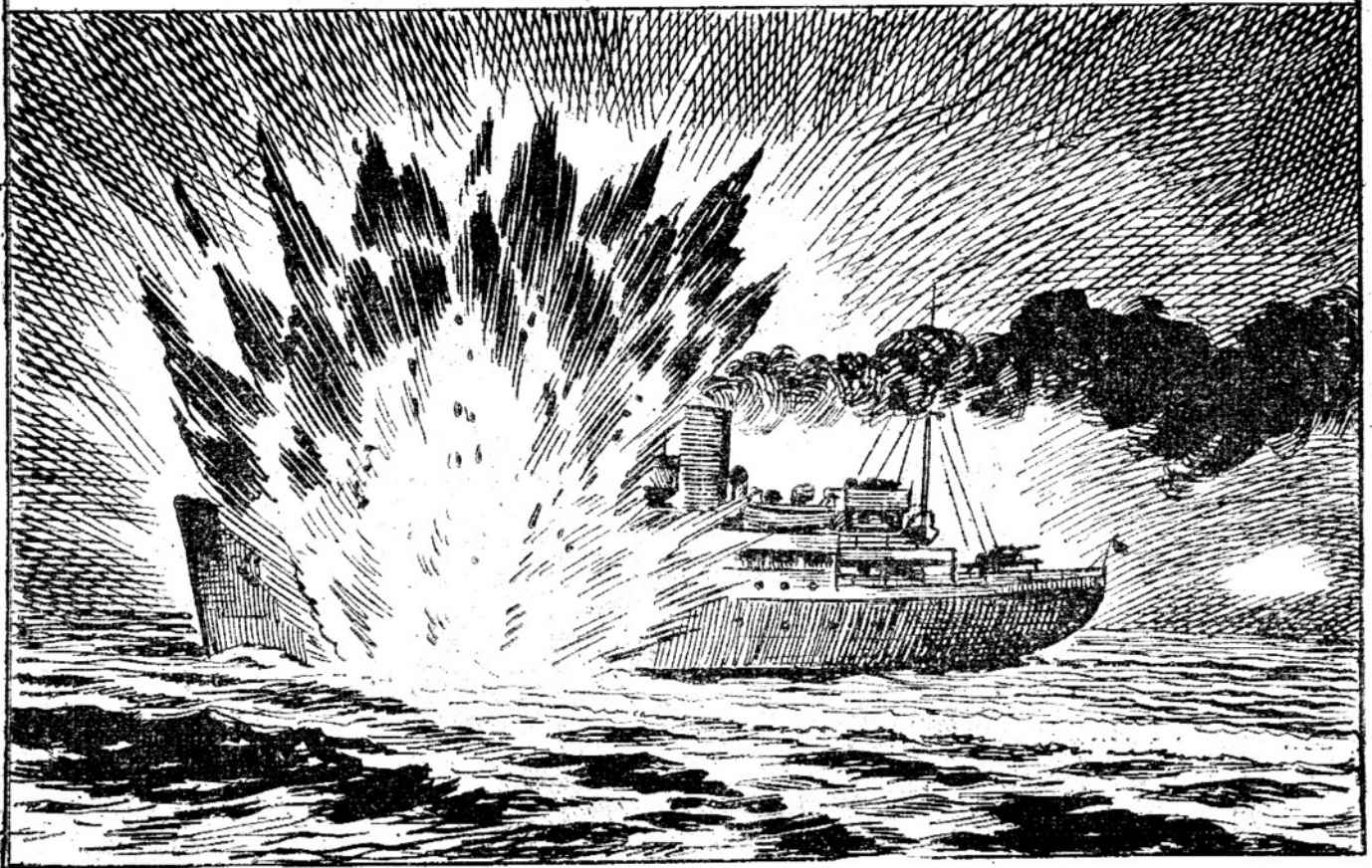
ON BOARD THE QUEEN OF THE ISLANDS, THE CAPTAIN HAD RUNG FOR "FULL SPEED AHEAD", AND THE PASSENGER SHIP WAS FORGING AWAY FROM THE BATTLE.

KEEP A SHARP LOOKOUT, HAWKINS... WE'RE TOO CLOSE TO THE ISLANDS FOR COMFORT.

AYE, AYE, SIR!



A MOUNTING CRESCENDO OF GUNFIRE RUMBLED OVER THE WATER, BUT NO SHELLS FELL NEAR THE QUEEN OF THE ISLANDS. IT SEEMED AS IF SHE HAD STOLEN AWAY UNOBSERVED... AND THEN A TORPEDO STRUCK HER!





CHAOS AND NEAR-PANIC REIGNED ON THE DECK, LIT AS IT WAS BY THE FLAMES WHICH ENVELOPED THE SHIP FORWARD OF THE WRECKED BRIDGE.



SMILER'S RINGING COMMAND QUELLED THE NOISY CONFUSION AND FOR A FEW MOMENTS THERE WAS A TENSE SILENCE. THEN A NEW TERROR STRUCK THEM... THERE CAME A HARSH GRATING NOISE AND THE DECK TILTED STEEPLY...



MEANWHILE, H.M.S. CULVERLEY WAS FIGHTING A GALLANT BUT LOSING BATTLE... A BATTLE THAT COULD HAVE BUT ONE ENDING.



CHU-SA (COMMANDER) TAKAYO OTSU OF HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY'S NAVY CLOSED HIS NIGHT GLASSES WITH A TRIUMPHANT SNAP AND TURNED TO HIS FIRST OFFICER.

SIGNAL 'CEASE FIRE, BREAK OFF THE ACTION.' THE BRITISH SHIPS ARE DESTROYED... A FEW MORE OF OUR HATED ENEMIES HAVE FAILED TO RUN FAST ENOUGH TO ESCAPE OUR MIGHT.





## Chapter 3. FIGHTING CASTAWAYS

BUT THERE WAS STILL LIFE ABOARD THE WRECKED QUEEN OF THE ISLANDS. AFTER TWO SEEMINGLY ENDLESS AND SILENT HOURS, A HANDFUL OF SURVIVORS WATCHED THE DAWN'S RAYS LIGHTEN THE SKY....



LOOK...  
HERE COMES  
A BOAT!

INSTANTLY THE STERN OF THE WRECK STIRRED INTO LIFE...



AHOY THERE!  
HOW MANY OF YOU  
ARE LEFT... IS THERE  
AN OFFICER  
ABOARD?

I'M LIEUTENANT SAMSON  
AND THERE ARE ABOUT THIRTY  
OF US HERE, SOMEWHAT THE  
WORSE FOR WEAR. GLAD  
TO SEE YOU... I GUESS  
YOU'RE FROM THE  
DESTROYER.

THE DESTROYER'S PINNACLE SLOWLY EDGED IN CLOSE TO THE JAGGED CORAL REEF ON WHICH THE PASSENGER SHIP RESTED... AND THE MIDSHIPMAN SCRAMBLED ASHORE.



SMILER SEATED HIMSELF BESIDE JOHN CORK AND THEY SET OFF...





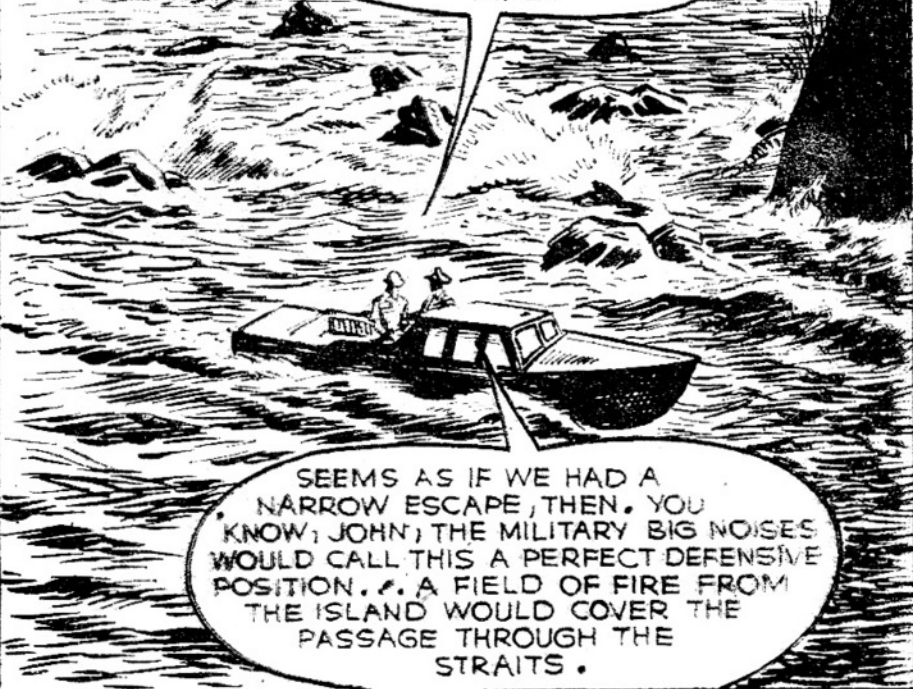
## No Quarter

THEY FOUND THAT THE ISLAND WAS LITTLE MORE THAN A VOLCANIC CONE RISING STARKLY OUT OF THE SEA. ON THE NORTHERN SIDE, FACING ACROSS THE STRAITS, HOWEVER, IT SLOPED DOWN MORE GENTLY INTO A SANDY BAY WHICH WAS RINGED BY A CORAL REEF ON WHICH THE QUEEN OF THE ISLANDS WAS WRECKED. THE SEA TO THE SOUTH OF THE ISLAND WAS AN IMPASSABLE MAELSTROM OF DANGEROUS CURRENTS AND ROCKY ISLETS JUTTING OUT OF THE DEPTHS.



CREEPING ALONG IN THE SHALLOW WATER CLOSE TO THE SOUTHERN SHORE, THEY CIRCUMNAVIGATED THE ISLAND.

GREAT SCOTT! IF THE SHIPS HAD DRIFTED INTO THOSE WATERS, THEY WOULD HAVE BROKEN UP IN NO TIME.



SEEMS AS IF WE HAD A NARROW ESCAPE, THEN. YOU KNOW, JOHN, THE MILITARY BIG NOISES WOULD CALL THIS A PERFECT DEFENSIVE POSITION. A FIELD OF FIRE FROM THE ISLAND WOULD COVER THE PASSAGE THROUGH THE STRAITS.

THE SURVEY OVER, THE SURVIVORS OF BOTH SHIPS WERE TRANSFERRED TO THE SANDY BEACH.

WE WERE CARRYING SOME IMPORTANT RADAR EQUIPMENT AND SPECIALISTS TO JAVA. WHAT ARE THE CHANCES OF YOUR CONTINUING THE JOURNEY IN THE BOAT WITH THEM, JOHN? DO YOU THINK YOU COULD MAKE IT?

IT'S JUST ABOUT POSSIBLE, SIR... THERE'S PLENTY OF FUEL AND IF THESE GENTLEMEN ARE PREPARED TO COME... WE'LL HAVE A TRY.



OF COURSE WE'LL COME. THE EQUIPMENT IS ON THE DECK OVER THERE... IT SHOULD BE UNDAMAGED FOR IT WAS WELL PACKED.

MR. PENNYFEATHER COUGHED...AND SPOKE UP.

SMILER, YOU'VE GOT THE LIGHT OF BATTLE IN YOUR EYE. WITH YOUR PERMISSION, I'D LIKE TO STAY ON THE ISLAND WITH THE REST OF YOU... PERHAPS I COULD BE OF AID.

THOSE SPECS OF YOURS DON'T MISS MUCH, PROF. YOU'RE RIGHT! I HAVE GOT SOMETHING IN MIND... AND YOUR EXPERT HELP WOULD BE VERY USEFUL.

SOON THE CRATES CONTAINING THE RADAR EQUIPMENT WERE SALVAGED FROM THE WRECKED SHIP AND LOADED INTO THE DESTROYER'S BOAT. WELL STOCKED WITH FOOD, WATER AND FUEL, THE TINY CRAFT SET OFF FOR DISTANT JAVA.

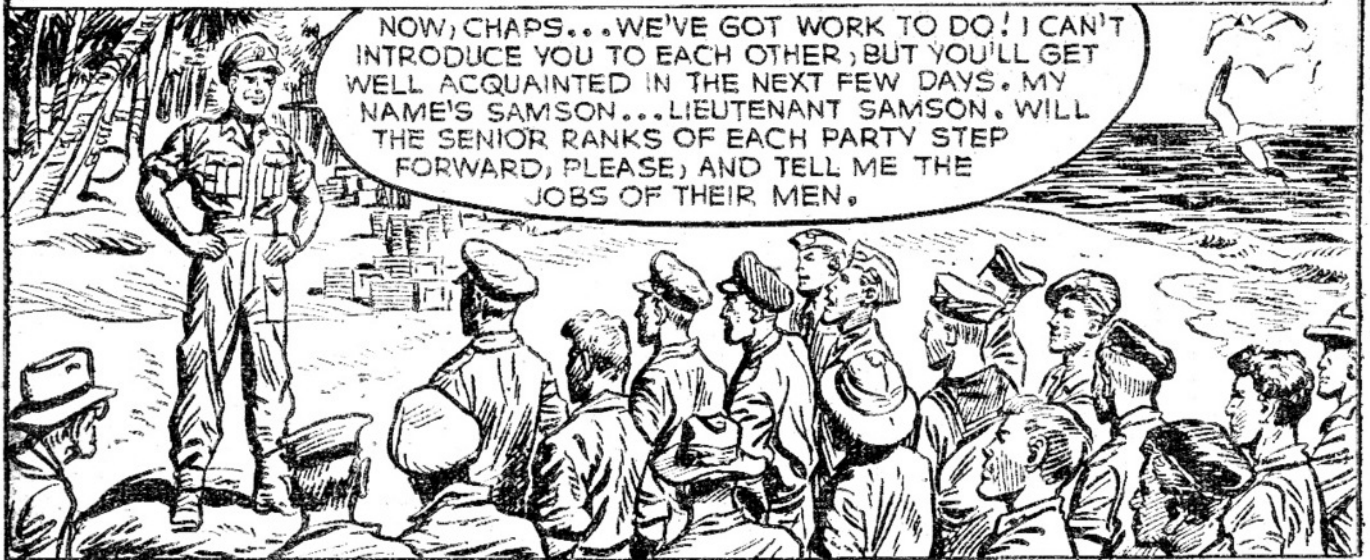
GOOD LUCK!

ALL THE BEST, CHUMS!

THEY'LL NEED ALL THE LUCK GOING... TWO HUNDRED MILES IN AN OPEN BOAT WITH THE JAP NAVY ON THE PROWL. THAT'S NOT GOING TO BE A PLEASURE TRIP.



THE BOAT DWINDLED UNTIL IT WAS A MERE DOT ON THE MIRROR-LIKE SURFACE OF THE SEA. THEN SMILER SAMSON TURNED TO HIS STRANGELY ASSORTED COMPANY...



NOW, CHAPS... WE'VE GOT WORK TO DO! I CAN'T INTRODUCE YOU TO EACH OTHER, BUT YOU'LL GET WELL ACQUAINTED IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS. MY NAME'S SAMSON... LIEUTENANT SAMSON. WILL THE SENIOR RANKS OF EACH PARTY STEP FORWARD, PLEASE, AND TELL ME THE JOBS OF THEIR MEN.

AFTER A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF SHUFFLING, SIX MEN STEPPED OUT FROM AMONGST THEIR FELLOWS.

PETTY OFFICER HOWARD, SIR. I HAVE TWELVE MEN... TWO OF THEM WOUNDED. TWO TORPEDO AND FIVE GUNNERY RATINGS, TWO STOKERS, ONE COOK.

SERGEANT HILL, SIR... TWO MEN... SPECIAL BOAT SECTION... FROGMEN.

SERGEANTS SMITHSON AND CLARKE, SIR. CYPHER SECTION.

LANCE CORPORAL BINKS AND TWO MEN, SIR, ORDNANCE CORPS.

CORPORAL DOWNES, SIR. PARTY OF TWELVE ROYAL ENGINEERS... TANK RECOVERY SECTION.

CORPORAL PUNTER, SIR, R.A.F. SIX MEN. BALLOON BARRAGE SECTION.



SMILER'S FACE BROADENED INTO A GRIN... AND FOR THE FIRST TIME FOR DAYS, HE LOOKED REALLY CHEERFUL.

COULDN'T BE BETTER!  
PETTY OFFICER HOWARD...  
GOT ANY SWIMMERS  
AMONGST YOUR MEN?

YESSIR!

SEND TWO OR  
THREE OF THEM OUT TO THE  
SHIP TO SEE IF THEY CAN BRING  
THAT BOAT ASHORE... THE ONE  
HANGING FROM THE DAVITS.  
WE'RE GOING TO NEED  
THAT.

WHILE THE SAILORS WENT ABOUT THEIR TASK, THE  
YOUNG OFFICER OUTLINED HIS PLANS TO THE REST  
OF THE MAROONED MEN.

WITH THE HELP OF YOU ALL, WE'RE GOING TO  
TURN THIS LUMP OF LAVA INTO A SECOND ROCK  
OF GIBRALTAR. WE'RE NOT GOING TO WAIT HERE FOR  
THE JAPS TO WALK ASHORE AND TAKE US PRISONER.  
OF COURSE, WE MAY BE PICKED UP BY OUR BLOKES  
... BUT THE NAVY HAVE VERY FEW SHIPS TO  
SPARE TO SEND FOR A FEW ODD-BODS  
LIKE US.

OUR TWO  
SHIPS ARE LYING  
OUT THERE FULL OF THE  
THINGS WE NEED... FOOD,  
GUNS, AMMO, RADIO,  
RADAR. LET'S SEE WHAT  
WE CAN SALVAGE FROM  
THE WRECKS, SHALL  
WE?





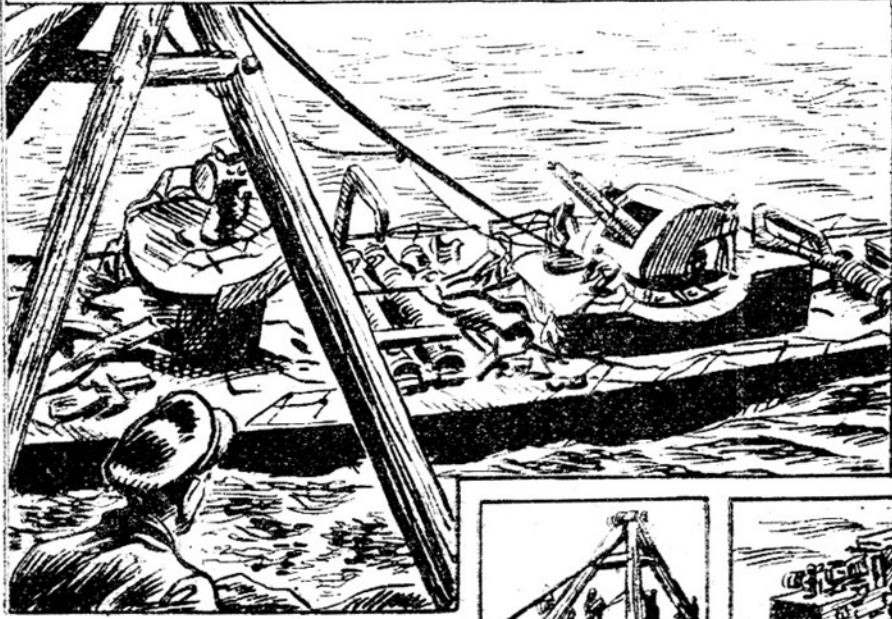
## No Quarter

IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS, SMILER'S CHEERFUL ENTHUSIASM INFECTED THE CASTAWAYS, AND THEY THREW THEMSELVES EAGERLY INTO THE SALVAGE OPERATIONS.



LUMME! TINNED PINEAPPLES... AND THE ISLAND'S COVERED WITH BLOOMIN' PINEAPPLE PLANTS!

THE NAVAL GUNNERS AND THE TANK RECOVERY ENGINEERS WERE USING ALL THEIR SPECIALISED SKILLS IN THEIR EFFORTS TO RECOVER THE DESTROYER'S GUNS.



COME UP,  
YOU BRUTE!  
THERE'S A BIT MORE  
OF THESE THAN THE  
SIX-POUNDERS  
ON OUR  
TANKS.





MEANWHILE EVERY USABLE PIECE OF AMMUNITION WAS BEING RETRIEVED FROM THE DECK LOCKERS AND THE PARTLY SUBMERGED AMMUNITION STORES OF THE WARSHIP.

CHIEF... I RECKON IT MIGHT JUST BE POSSIBLE TO REACH 'B' TURRET STORE IF WE CAN GET THE WATER-TIGHT DOORS OPEN.

HIMM! IT'S WORTH A TRY... DUMP THAT SHELL, AND I'LL COME WITH YOU AND HAVE A LOOK!



ON THE ISLAND ITSELF... NOW, NICKNAMED CRUSOE ISLAND BY THE CASTAWAYS... EVERY FIT MAN WAS HARD AT WORK.

AH, HERE'S THE IDEAL SPOT FOR THE RADAR. SEE, IT GIVES A CLEAR VIEW OF THE ENEMY'S ONLY LINE OF ATTACK. EXCELLENT!

PHEW! I WAS BEGINNING TO THINK YOU WERE GOING TO HIKE RIGHT UP THE BLOOMIN' MOUNTAIN, PROF.



SMILER SAMSON HAD SET HIMSELF THE TASK OF REPAIRING THE WIRELESS EQUIPMENT WHICH HAD BEEN DAMAGED WHEN THE QUEEN OF THE ISLANDS WAS HIT BY THE TORPEDO.



SKILLED SIGNALS OFFICER AND AN EX-RADIO AMATEUR, THE MYSTERY OF WIRELESS WAS AN OPEN BOOK TO LIEUTENANT BILL SAMSON...

THAT'S OKAY! NOW I'LL TUNE IN TO THE NAVAL BASE ON THE FREQUENCY WE FOUND ABOARD THE SHIP. STAND BY, LADS...



CONTACT WAS EVENTUALLY ESTABLISHED WITH ALLIED HEADQUARTERS IN JAVA, AND WHEN IT WAS LEARNED THAT THE SURVIVORS INCLUDED CYPHER PERSONNEL, COMMUNICATION WAS CONTINUED IN CODE.

"...NO SHIP AVAILABLE TO RESCUE YOU, BUT REINFORCEMENTS ARMY AND NAVY EXPECTED IN FIVE DAYS STOP WE WILL KEEP LISTENING WATCH ON THIS FREQUENCY."





TWO NIGHTS LATER, UNDER THE CLEAR STARLIT SKY, THE TIRED BUT HAPPY SHIPWRECKED MEN OF ALL THREE SERVICES GATHERED ROUND A FIRE TO ENJOY A WELL-EARNED MEAL.

YOU'VE DONE A WONDERFUL JOB, CHAPS... THIS EVENING I WIRELESSED JAVA AND TOLD THEM THAT IF THE JAPS CAME THIS WAY WE'D STAMP THEIR CALLING CARDS FOR THEM. THEY SAID... THANKS... AND GOOD LUCK. WE CAN BE ASSURED THEY WILL PICK US UP IF HUMANLY POSSIBLE. THEY ALSO TOLD ME THAT OUR BOAT PARTY ARRIVED SAFELY.



A BUZZ OF EXCITEMENT ROSE FROM THE MEN... AND WAS INSTANTLY QUELLED AS A SHOUT RANG OUT FROM THE MOUNTAINSIDE ABOVE THE BEACH.

**RADAR WARNING!  
PLANES APPROACHING!**



**QUICKLY!  
DOUSE THAT FIRE!**  
IT WOULD BE A PITY TO SPOIL THE SURPRISE WE'VE GOT WAITING FOR THE LITTLE YELLOW MEN.

TENSE MOMENTS LATER...



ARE THEY JAPS... OR ARE THEY OURS?

JAPS, MATE... YOU CAN TELL THE SOUND OF THE PERISHERS' ENGINES A MILE OFF. DOESN'T LOOK AS IF THEY SAW OUR FIRE.

IT WAS 11.15 THE NEXT MORNING WHEN THE FIRST JAPANESE SHIPS WERE SIGHTED. THEY WERE TWO DARK GREY DESTROYERS, NO DOUBT THE ADVANCE GUARD OF A LARGER FORCE...

WE'LL HOLD OUR FIRE. THERE SHOULD BE BETTER TARGETS TO COME. LET THEM LOOK OVER THE WRECKS AND DECIDE WE'VE ALL HAD IT.

IT'S A CRYING SHAME OUR TWO-MEN TORPEDOES WERE WRECKED. I RECKON WE COULD HAVE DONE SOME DAMAGE WITH THEM.



SMILER SWUNG ROUND ON THE FROGMAN SERGEANT... HIS ATTENTION CAUGHT BY ONE WORD...

TORPEDOES! WHY DIDN'T I THINK OF THOSE BEFORE? PETTY OFFICER HOWARD, ARE THOSE TORPEDO TUBES ON THE CULVERLEY DAMAGED... AND IF NOT, HOW ARE THEY FIRED?

TH-THEY'RE OKAY, SIR, WE LEFT THEM 'COS WE DIDN'T SEE HOW WE COULD USE THEM ON THE ISLAND. THEY'RE FIRED BY COMPRESSED AIR... BUT THERE'S NO EQUIPMENT ON THE SHIP TO BUILD UP THE NECESSARY AIR PRESSURE NOW.





COME ON, HOWARD, COLLECT YOUR TORPEDO BLOKES AND WE'LL SEE THE RAFF BALLOON CORPORAL. WITH ANY LUCK THERE MAY BE ENOUGH PRESSURE IN HIS GAS CYLINDERS TO FIRE THOSE TORPEDOES. WE'LL HAVE TO GET A MOVE ON, THOUGH.



THE PRESSURE IN THE CYLINDERS WAS FOUND TO BE SUFFICIENT, AND AS THE ENEMY DESTROYERS PASSED OUT OF SIGHT THROUGH THE STRAITS, THE BOAT LADEN WITH GAS CYLINDERS SET OFF ACROSS THE BAY.

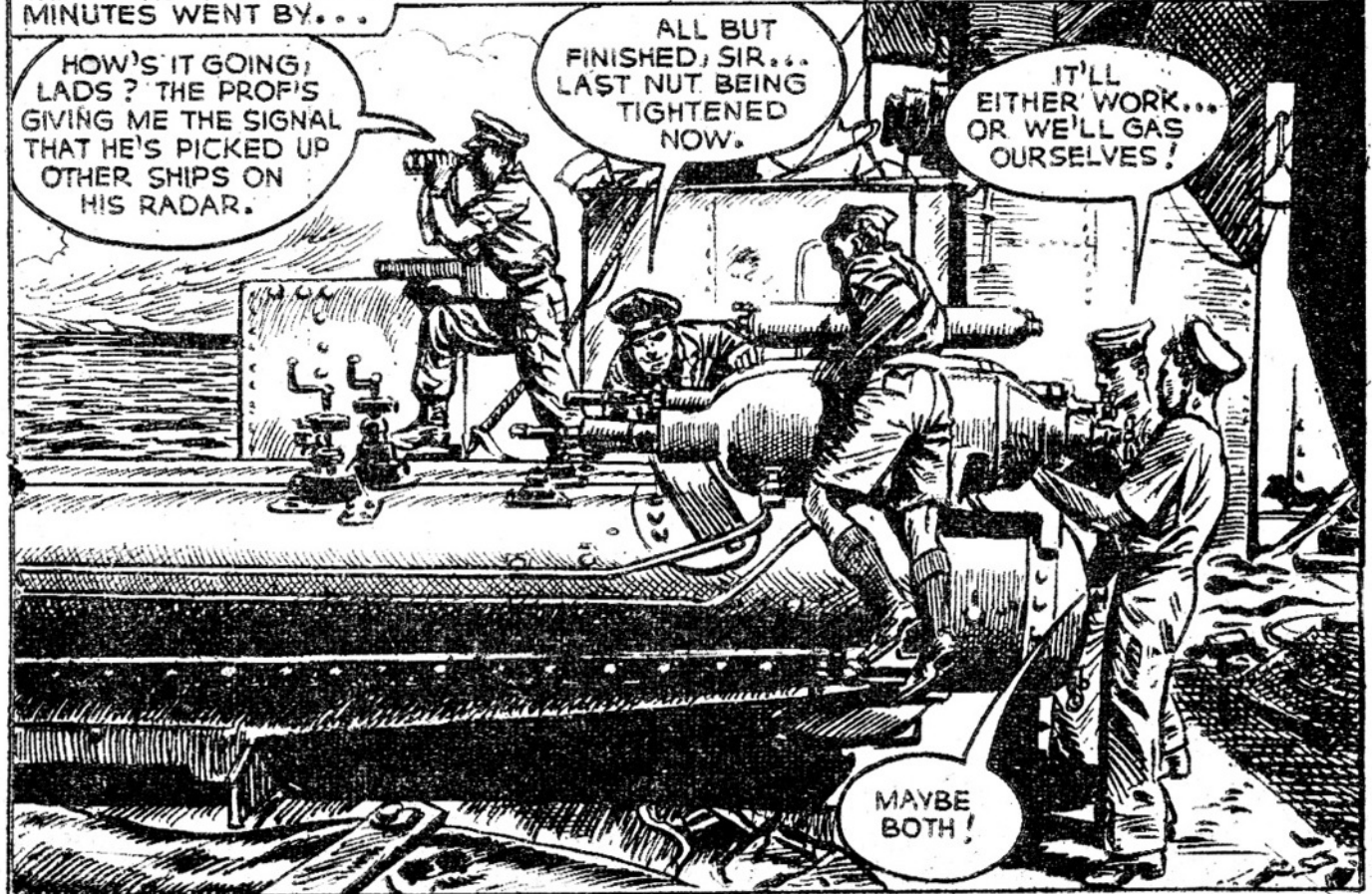


FRENZIED ACTIVITY FOLLOWED ABOARD *H.M.S. CULVERLEY* AS THE MEN STROVE TO ADAPT THE CYLINDERS TO THE FIRING MECHANISM ATOP THE TWIN TORPEDO TUBES. TWENTY MINUTES WENT BY...

HOW'S IT GOING, LADS? THE PROF'S GIVING ME THE SIGNAL THAT HE'S PICKED UP OTHER SHIPS ON HIS RADAR.

ALL BUT FINISHED, SIR... LAST NUT BEING TIGHTENED NOW.

IT'LL EITHER WORK... OR WE'LL GAS OURSELVES!



MAYBE BOTH!

SOON THE SUPERSTRUCTURE OF A LARGE WARSHIP SHOWED ABOVE THE HORIZON.

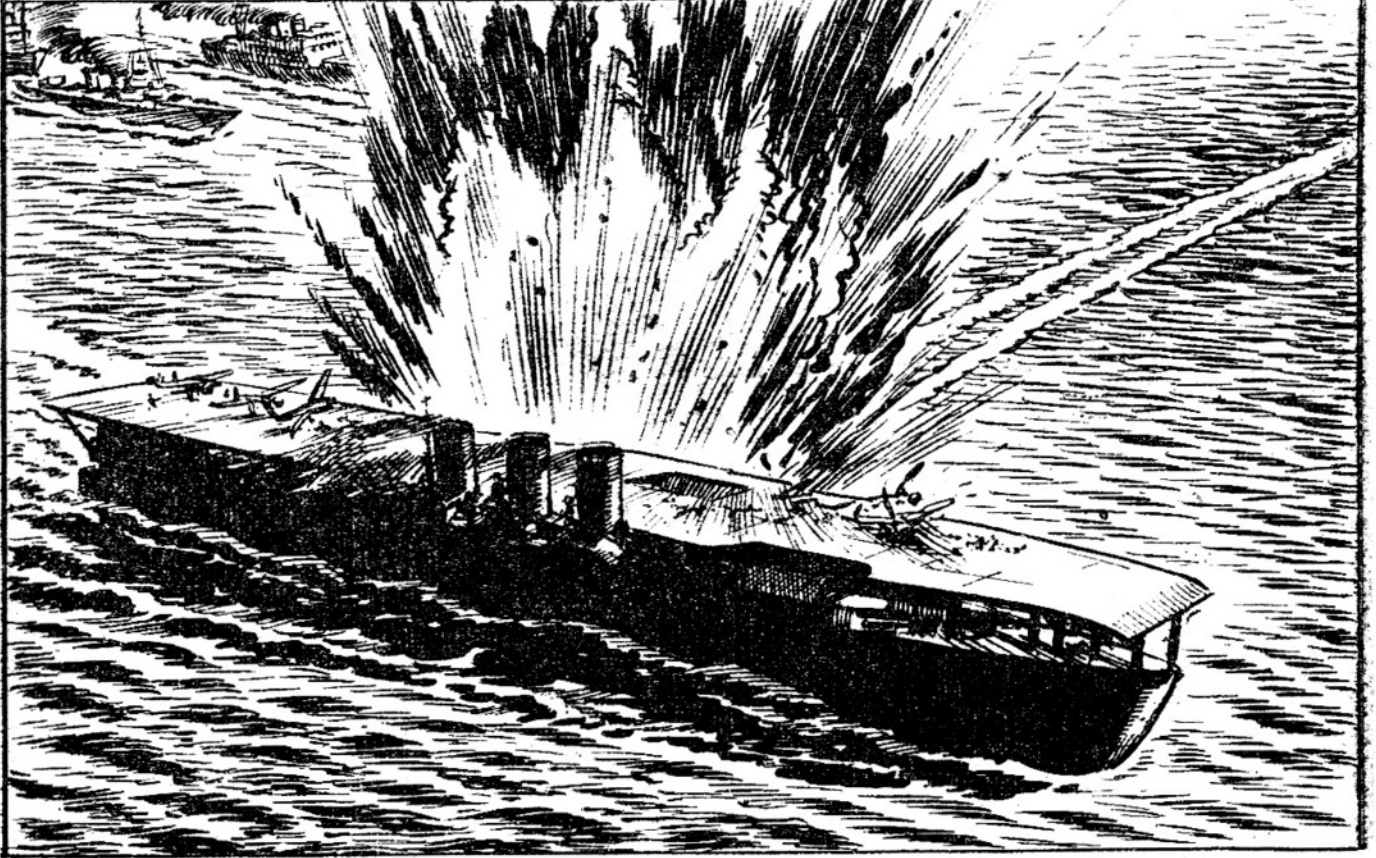


IMMENSELY PLEASED WITH THE CONFIDENCE SMILER SAMSON HAD PLACED IN THEM, THE TWO SAILORS CONCENTRATED FIERCELY ON THEIR DIFFICULT TASK...





FOR A HUNDRED NERVE-SHATTERING SECONDS, THE MEN ON THE DESTROYER WAITED. HAD THEY WASTED THEIR TORPEDOES OR ... **THEN...**



THE JAPANESE CARRIER WAS STRUCK A SUDDEN AND CRIPPLING BLOW, BUT SMILER KNEW THAT RETRIBUTION WOULD NOT BE FAR OFF.



HOW ABOUT THAT, CHARLIE... SMACK ON THE NOSE!

NOT BAD; NOBBY, NOT BAD... I'VE SEEN WORSE.

BOYS, YOU'VE MADE A NAME FOR YOURSELVES... YOU'VE FIRED THE FIRST SHOT IN THE BATTLE OF CRUSOE ISLAND. NOW, LET'S GET TO HECK OUT OF HERE BEFORE THE JAPS WORK OUT WHERE THOSE TORPEDOES CAME FROM.

## Chapter 4. BATTLE OF CRUSOE ISLAND

BY THE TIME THE INTREPID MEN REACHED THEIR ISLAND FORTRESS, ENEMY WARSHIPS WERE WEAVING AROUND THE STRICKEN CARRIER...



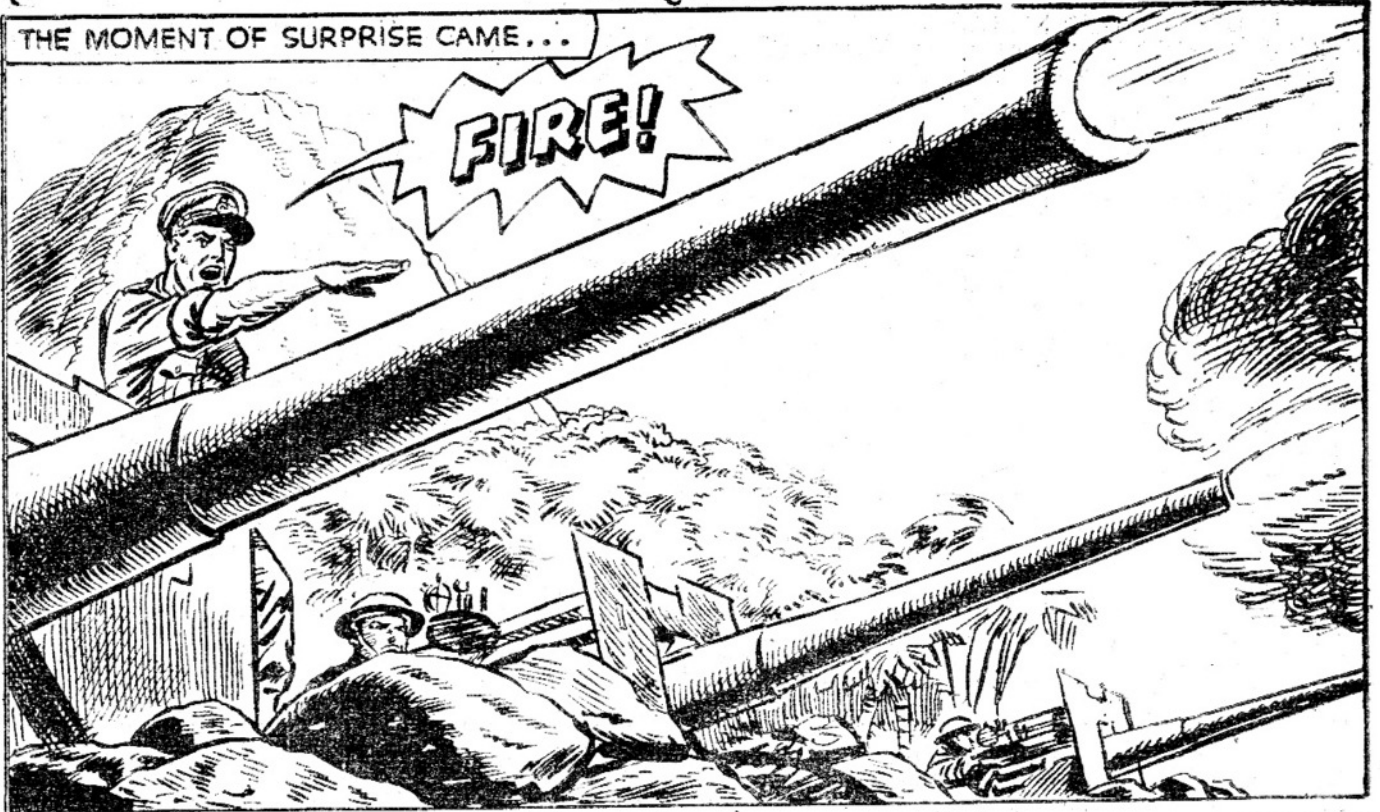
DESPITE THE MYSTERIOUS SINKING OF THEIR CARRIER ESCORT, THE TROOPSHIPS WERE STILL MOVING STEADILY TOWARDS THE STRAITS... INTO RANGE OF THE HIDDEN GUNS ON CRUSOE ISLAND.





THE MOMENT OF SURPRISE CAME...

**FIRE!**



RANGES HAD BEEN CALCULATED TO A YARD, AND EVEN THOUGH THE MOUNTINGS AND THE GUN-CREWS WERE MAKE-SHIFT, THAT FIRST SALVO WAS ON TARGET.



AGAIN THE GUNS ROARED... BUT THE JAPANESE  
NAVY HAD NOW FOUND THEIR ENEMY...





FOR TWO HOURS THE BATTLE RAGED. ANOTHER TROOP TRANSPORT WAS HIT HARD AND IN A DESPERATE CLOSE ATTACK, A DESTROYER RECEIVED THE FULL FORCE OF THE ISLAND'S GUNS IN ONE CRASHING BLOW. THE ENEMY TURNED AWAY!



THE SUDDEN RELEASE OF TENSION AS THE ACTION ENDED LEFT THE ISLAND'S DEFENDERS LIMP AND EXHAUSTED. THE GREAT BURNISHED ORB OF THE SUN WAS SINKING TOWARDS THE SEA; AND SMILER KNEW THAT NIGHT WOULD BRING FRESH DANGERS.



AT SMILER'S REQUEST, MR. PENNYFEATHER RETURNED TO HIS VITAL RADAR LOOK-OUT POST, AND THEN THE YOUNG OFFICER SEARCHED OUT CORPORAL PUNTER, R.A.F.

CORPORAL, IN WHAT CONDITION IS YOUR BALLOON? D'YOU THINK YOU COULD GET IT INTO THE AIR?

I DON'T SEE WHY NOT, SIR... BUT THERE WILL ONLY BE ENOUGH GAS TO HOIST IT TWO OR THREE HUNDRED FEET.



WHILST THERE WAS STILL SOME LIGHT, THE FOLDED BARRAGE BALLOON WAS TRANSPORTED TO THE NORTH-EAST SIDE OF THE ISLAND...AND INFLATION STARTED WITH ALL SPEED.

HURRY UP WITH THAT CYLINDER...





BY THE TIME THE R.A.F. MEN WERE ABLE TO HOIST THE PARTIALLY INFLATED BALLOON, THE MOON WAS RIDING HIGH IN THE NIGHT SKY.

WHY DID YOU PICK THIS SPOT FOR THE BALLOON, SIR?

WELL, CORPORAL! MY GUESS IS THAT THE JAPS WILL HAVE WHISTLED UP PLANES FROM ANOTHER CARRIER TO HAVE A BANG AT US. THEIR OBVIOUS APPROACH WOULD BE ALONG THE LINE OF OUR GUNS, ESPECIALLY WITH THE VOLCANO IN THE WAY IF THEY CAME FROM ANY OTHER DIRECTION. I'M HOPING THAT YOUR BALLOON PLUS THE POM-POMS CAN BREAK UP THAT LINE OF ATTACK.

AN UNEASY QUIET HUNG OVER THE ISLAND, AND THE WEARY CASTAWAYS TRIED TO SNATCH SOME SLEEP BEFORE THE CALL TO ACTION CAME AGAIN.

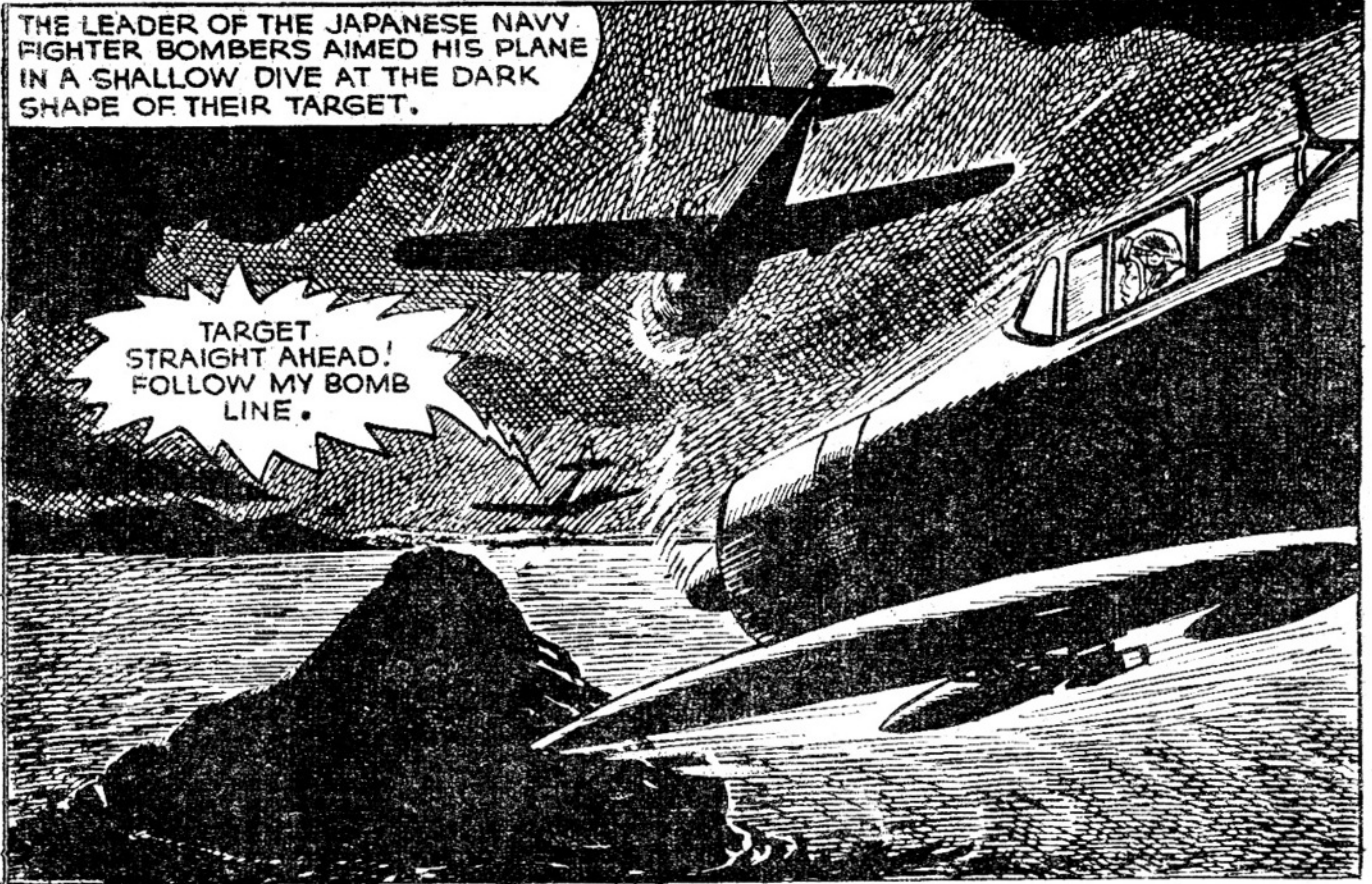
THREE O'CLOCK AND NO ATTACK. MAYBE I GUESSED WRONG ... I CERTAINLY HOPE SO.

I'M AFRAID YOU WEREN'T WRONG, SMILER... HERE COME THEIR PLANES. NOT MANY...

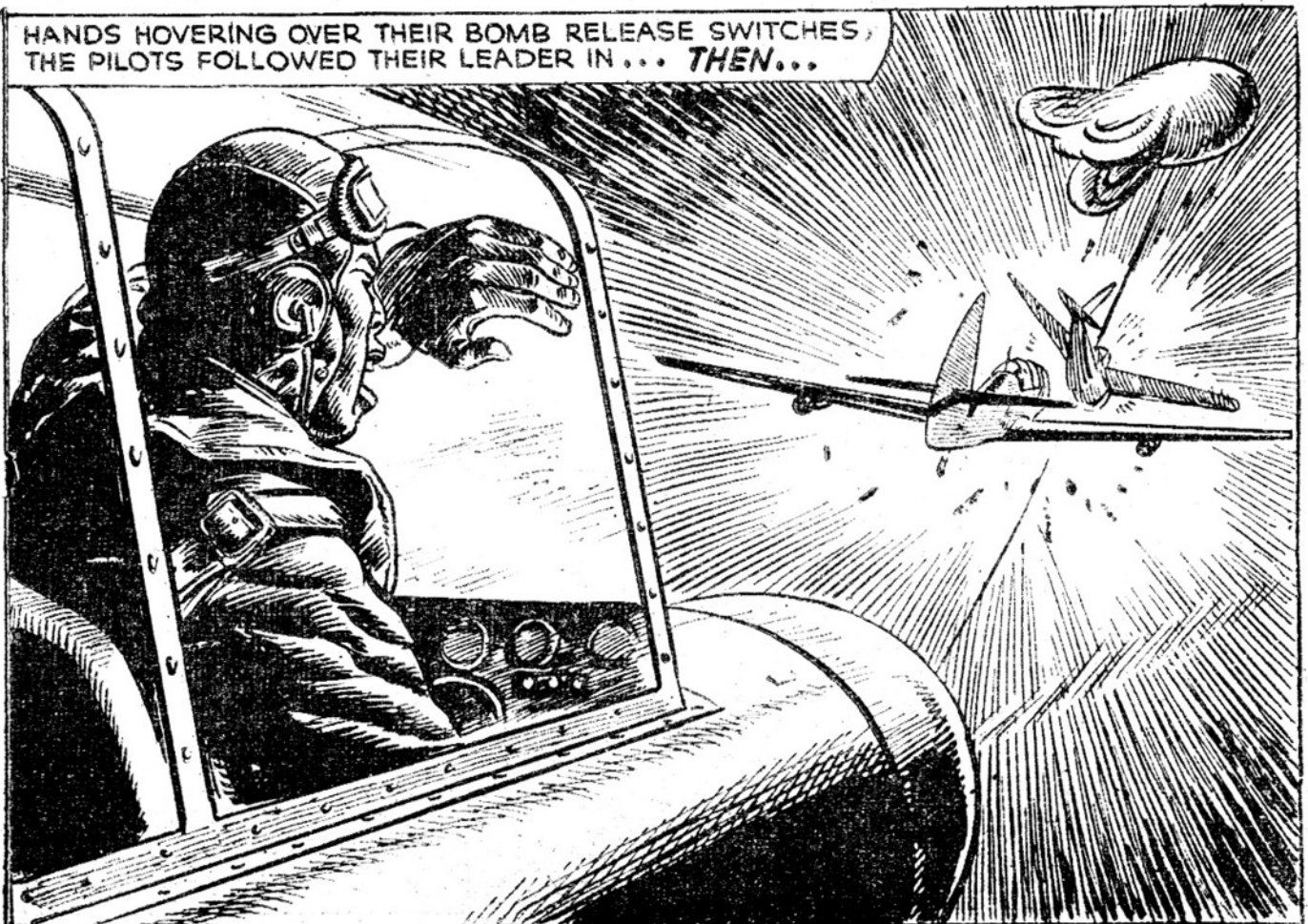


THE LEADER OF THE JAPANESE NAVY FIGHTER BOMBERS AIMED HIS PLANE IN A SHALLOW DIVE AT THE DARK SHAPE OF THEIR TARGET.

TARGET STRAIGHT AHEAD! FOLLOW MY BOMB LINE.



HANDS HOVERING OVER THEIR BOMB RELEASE SWITCHES, THE PILOTS FOLLOWED THEIR LEADER IN ... **THEN...**

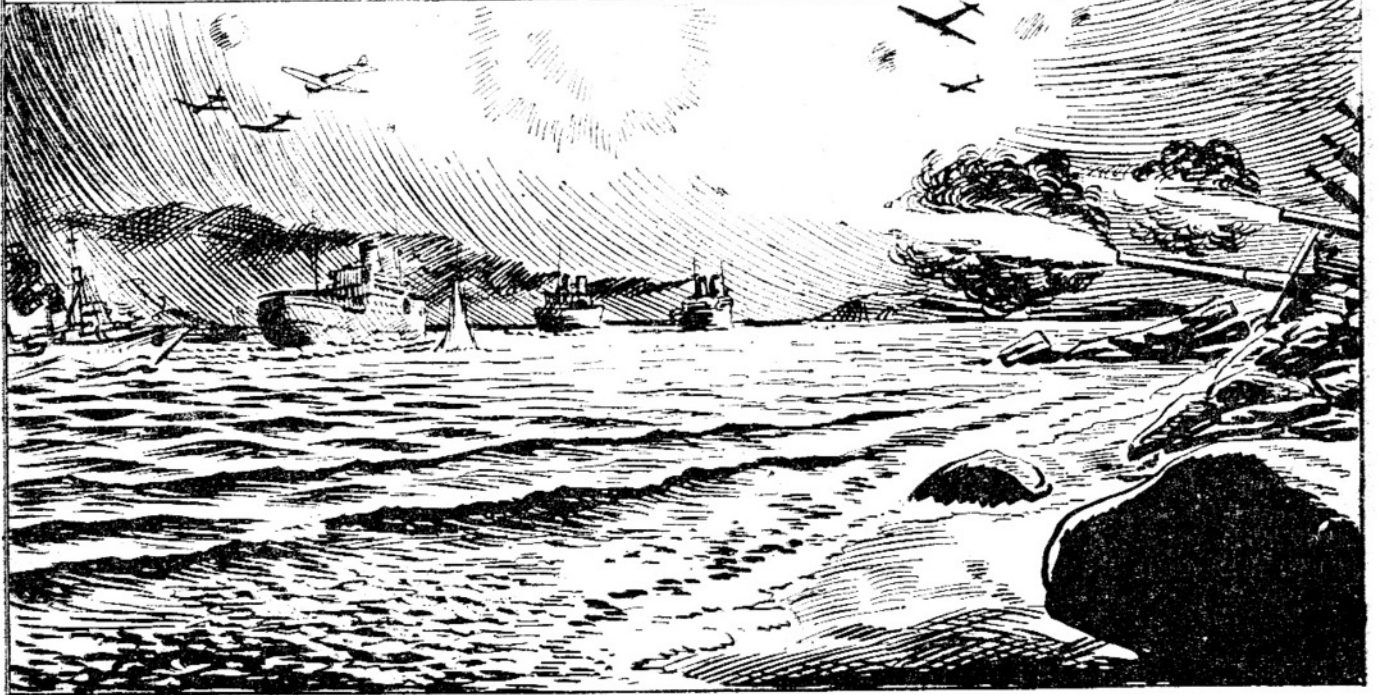




THE SECOND PLANE HIT THE FIRST, AND AS THE THIRD TRIED TO AVOID A SIMILAR COLLISION, THE POM-POMS OPENED FIRE.



AS THE OTHER JAPANESE PLANES SWUNG AWAY TO START A FRESH BOMBING RUN, A STARSHELL FROM THE ISLAND'S DEFENCES BURST OVER THE SEA. THE ENEMY SHIPS WERE ON THE MOVE...



THE NIGHT BECAME HIDEOUS WITH THE CRASH OF GUNFIRE AS SHELL AFTER SHELL WAS AIMED AT THE TROOPSHIPS... AND THE POM-POMS HAMMERED CONTINUOUSLY AT THE FIGHTER BOMBERS WHICH WERE COMING IN AGAIN...



... THIS TIME, ONE BOMBER, AT LEAST, WAS ON TARGET.



AFTER TWENTY MINUTES, THE REMAINING GUNS FALTERED... AND STOPPED. THE ENEMY HAD RETIRED ONCE MORE, BUT THE DEFENDERS WERE DESPERATELY TIRED.

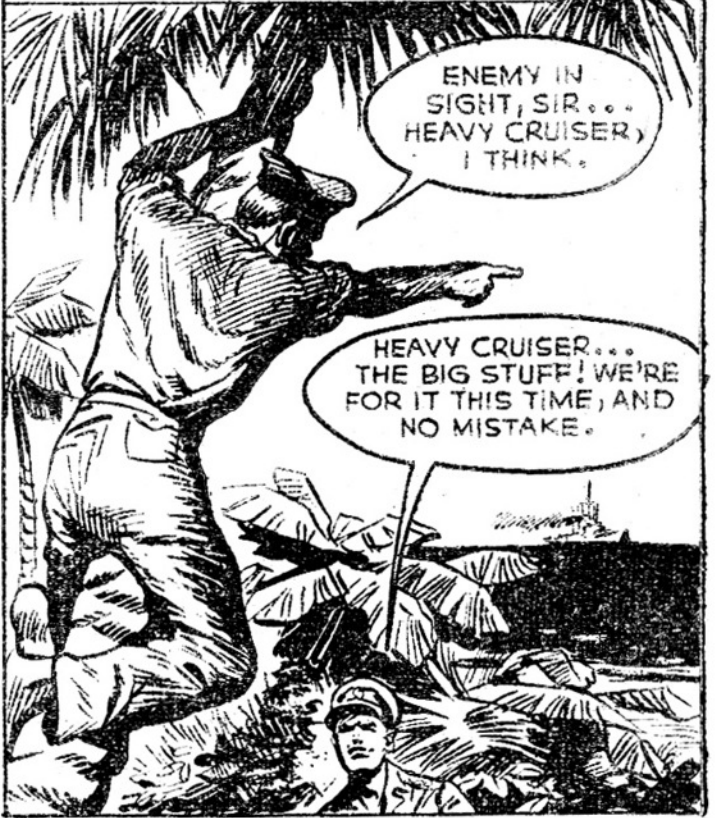
REST ALL YOU CAN, CHAPS...  
I'M AFRAID THERE WILL BE  
MORE FIGHTING TO  
COME...



TWO HOURS AFTER DAWN AN OMINOUS GREY SUPERSTRUCTURE WAS SEEN ON THE HORIZON BY A LOOK-OUT.

ENEMY IN  
SIGHT, SIR...  
HEAVY CRUISER,  
I THINK.

HEAVY CRUISER...  
THE BIG STUFF! WE'RE  
FOR IT THIS TIME, AND  
NO MISTAKE.



THE CRUISER LOOMED MENACINGLY INTO VIEW, AND THE MEN GRIMLY WATCHED HER APPROACH. BUT THEY DID NOT FLINCH.

WITH THEIR  
BIG GUNS THEY'LL  
BE ABLE TO HIT US FOR  
TEN MINUTES BEFORE WE  
CAN HIT BACK. KEEP UNDER  
COVER, LADS, UNTIL I GIVE  
THE WORD. LET'S HOPE  
BY THEN WE'VE STILL  
GOT SOME GUNS  
LEFT!



THE JAPANESE CRUISER'S 8-INCH SHELLS BLASTED GREAT CRATERS OF SAND AND ROCK OUT OF THE ISLAND... AND BEFORE THEY COULD FIRE A SINGLE SHOT IN RETALIATION, TWO OF SMILER'S BATTERY WERE SHATTERED.



SMILER LED THE DASH TO THE SOLE SURVIVING 4.7-INCH GUN...



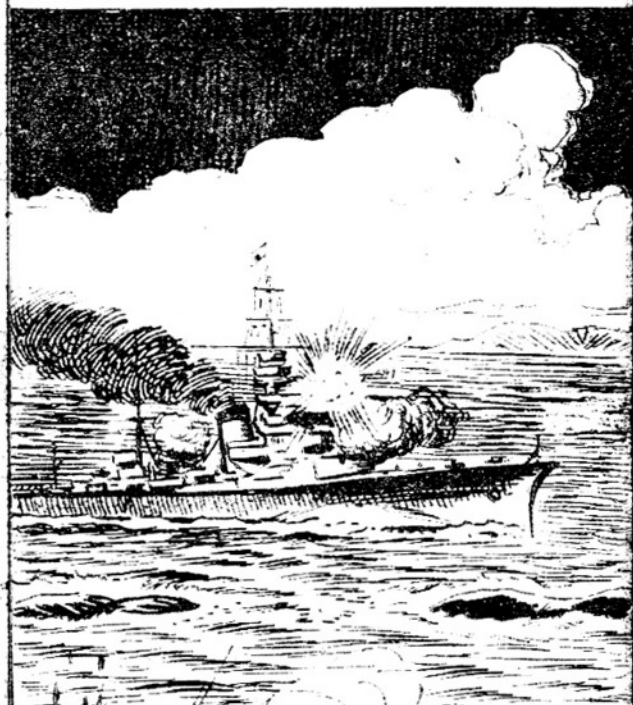


THE RANGE WAS SHORT, FOR THE LACK OF REPLY FROM THE ISLAND'S GUNS HAD LURED THE JAPANESE CRUISER CLOSE. TWICE THE SOLITARY GUN ROARED, BUT NO TELL-TALE FLASH OF CRIMSON SHOWED ON THE CRUISER'S ARMoured BULK.

DOWN ONE HUNDRED... GUN READY, SIR.

ONE SHORT, ONE OVER... LET'S HOPE THIS ONE HITS THE BULL...  
**FIRE!**

THIS TIME A CRY OF TRIUMPH RANG OUT, BUT WAS INSTANTLY DROWNED IN A THUNDEROUS ROAR AS AN ENEMY SHELL EXPLODED IN THE GUN POSITION.



THEY'VE HIT THE CRUISER!

AWE!  
BUT IT'S THE LAST ROUND THAT GUN WILL FIRE.



THE GUN WAS WRECKED, AND THE MEN MANNING IT WERE KNOCKED UNCONSCIOUS. SEVERAL MINUTES LATER, SMILER SAMSON CAME TO HIS SENSES TO FIND SERGEANT SMITHSON BENDING ANXIOUSLY OVER HIM.

MISTER SAMSON, MISTER SAMSON... A WIRELESS MESSAGE HAS JUST COME THROUGH... A NAVAL FORCE IS ON THE WAY TO US. IT WILL ARRIVE TO-DAY.

LOOK, SIR! LOOK WHAT'S COMING!



THROUGH PAIN-FILLED EYES, BILL SAMSON STARED ACROSS THE CALM, EMERALD WATERS OF THE BAY....

JAP  
LANDING CRAFT!





WITH A TREMENDOUS EFFORT, SMILER THREW OFF THE FEELING OF DESPAIR THAT GRIPPED HIM. HE FORCED HIMSELF TO HIS FEET.

COLLECT ALL THE SMALL ARMS YOU CAN FIND. SERGEANT HILL, TAKE HALF THE MEN TO THE LEFT FLANK... HOWARD, COVER THE RIGHT WITH THE REMAINDER. DON'T FIRE UNTIL YOU CAN'T MISS AND... GOOD LUCK, CHAPS!



THE JAPANESE BOATS MOVED TOWARDS THE ISLAND LIKE UGLY BLACK WATER BEETLES:



THE QUICK-FIRING OERLIKON CANNON POURED SHELLS INTO THE FRAIL LANDING CRAFT... BUT STILL THEY CAME ON.

ONE MORE MAGAZINE, AND I'VE HAD IT!

WELL, DON'T WASTE WHAT YOU'VE GOT... THERE'S TOO MANY OF THEM.



FIFTY SCREAMING JAPANESE MARINES REACHED THE WHITE SANDS OF CRUSOE ISLAND, AND TWENTY OF THOSE FELL AT THE WATER'S EDGE.





IN A MOMENT, THE ASSAULT TROOPS  
AND THE ISLAND'S DEFENDERS  
WERE LOCKED IN A BITTER  
HAND-TO-HAND BATTLE.



SAVAGELY, GIVING NO QUARTER AND  
ASKING NONE, THE CASTAWAYS  
FOUGHT FOR THEIR LIVES.

AAGH! SMILER...  
LOOK OUT!



AWKWARDLY, WITH NO THOUGHT FOR  
HIMSELF, THE ELDERLY MR. PENNYFEATHER  
HURLED HIMSELF DOWN UPON THE  
JAPANESE SOLDIER.

PROF!  
GREAT WORK!



DAZEDLY, SMILER SAMSON AND HIS MEN LOOKED AROUND THEM... SOMEHOW THEY HAD VANQUISHED THE TOUGH ENEMY ASSAULT TROOPS. THEN, FROM OUT AT SEA CAME THE THUNDER OF GUNS...

THANKS, PROF... YOU SAVED MY LIFE!

DELIGHTED TO HAVE BEEN OF ASSISTANCE, OLD CHAP... DELIGHTED!

SIR... THE NAVY'S HERE!



A HASTILY GATHERED ALLIED NAVAL FORCE SCATTERED THE JAPANESE INVASION FLEET...

SIGNAL THE ESCORT TO PICK UP THE MEN ON THE ISLAND... THE ENEMY AREN'T STAYING TO FIGHT.

AYE, AYE, SIR!

THEIR GUNNERY ISN'T UP TO USUAL JAP STANDARDS, SIR. THEY'RE WELL OFF TARGET.

THAT ONE HIT FROM THE ISLAND'S GUN HAD STRUCK A VITAL PART. IT HAD DAMAGED THE JAPANESE CRUISER'S GUNNERY CONTROL SYSTEM.





WHEN A DESTROYER'S BOATS REACHED THE BEACH OF CRUSOE ISLAND, SMILER SAMSON AND HIS MEN GENTLY CARRIED THEIR WOUNDED COMRADES ABOARD.



AND LOOKING BACK FROM THE LAST BOAT AS IT LEFT THE BATTLE-SCARRED BEACH, LIEUTENANT SMILER SAMSON KNEW THAT HE TOO WOULD NEVER FORGET CRUSOE ISLAND OR THE MEN WHO HAD FOUGHT THERE WITH HIM.



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